

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

A Biography of
HJALMAR EDGREN

By
Emory Lindquist

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CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Acknowledgments	ix
I. Family and Early Years	1
II. Military Service	8
III. Academic and Literary Activity, 1870-1880	15
IV. Lund and the University of Nebraska	22
V. The Years at Göteborg, 1891-1893	33
VI. The University of Nebraska, 1893-1901	43
VII. The Nobel Institute, 1901-1903	55
VIII. The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren	64
IX. A Composite Portrait	82
Notes	90
Index	95



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PREFACE

The movement of people in various periods of history provides a chronicle of the response of individuals and groups to their homeland in the context of the challenge and promise of life elsewhere. The general pattern of immigration to the United States, which is one phase of this broader movement across the centuries, resulted generally in the permanent exchange of the old for the new as the immigrant became a part of the symphony of American life. But there were variations upon this theme. One variation involved those immigrants who shared only a limited period of their lives in America and then returned to live out their years in the land of their birth. An unusual variant to the above patterns was the rare immigrant who actually lived intermittently in the two worlds of the homeland and his adopted country. Hjalmar Edgren was one of those rare persons.

The immigrants to America were diverse individuals with great variety in age, background, and culture. A wide range of factors—economic, political, religious, and social—combined with highly personal elements to bring millions of Europeans to the New World which seemed to be “the land of the future.” They contributed their talents, energy, and devotion to building America, and in the process, there were joys and sorrows, successes and failures. Most of them became tillers of the soil and workers in industry, mines, and factories, making substantial contributions to American economic life. Only a few became writers, artists, musicians, physicians, ministers, and scholars. Hjalmar Edgren was one of the scholarly few.

Hjalmar Edgren's American odyssey after he reached the age of twenty-one included the varied careers of a Union army officer in the Civil War, graduate student and teacher at Yale, professor and dean at the University of Nebraska, translator of Sanskrit and American literature, and poet. But his American experience of more than two decades was accompanied with intermittent periods in Sweden where he was teacher at Lund University, professor and first *rektor* of *Göteborgs Höghskola*, which became Göteborg University, member of the Nobel Institute related to the Swedish Academy awarding the Nobel Prize in literature, interpreter of American life to his countrymen, translator of world literature, and poet. Moreover, he was a good husband, father, and citizen.

The two worlds of Hjalmar Edgren were exacting and productive worlds. His dual loyalty enriched not only his life but that of both Sweden and the United States.

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My special appreciation goes to Mr. and Mrs. William E. Barkley, Lincoln, Nebraska, whose unfailing interest and support has made possible this publication. Moreover, Mrs. Barkley, a daughter of Hjalmar and Marianne Edgren, and Mr. Barkley, have shared many personal items that have enriched the study.

I

Family and Early Years

In the charming landscape of Värmland, a province in the middle part of Sweden known as Svealand, lies Älvsbacka, a village located between Filipstad to the east, the birthplace of Captain John Ericsson of *Monitor* fame, and Ransäter to the west, home of Erik Gustaf Geijer, one of Sweden's greatest poets. This is an area of sparkling streams, luscious meadows, beautiful lakes, and abundant birch, pine, and spruce. Gustaf Fröding, one of Värmland's great poets, has described his native region in these words:

O'er the clouds is a glow, O'er the lake is a sheen,
There's sunlight on beach and on nest
Around them the woods are a glorious green
The grass feels the south wind's caress.

Not only has nature been kind to Värmland in the abundance of natural beauty, but the forests and soil have also been productive. Beneath the surface there was hidden wealth as man uncovered the iron deposits that had been accumulating through the centuries. Mining was a thriving activity for many years during the nineteenth century, and earlier. Moreover, Värmland was a favored place in the realm of man's spirit because this province gave birth to Esaias Tegnér, Gustaf Fröding, Erik Gustaf Geijer, and Selma Lagerlöf, among the great names of Swedish literature.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

When the birch trees in the Älvsbacka area were aglow with brilliant colors in October, 1840, there was quiet expectancy as *Bruksförvaltaren* Axel Hjalmar Edgren and his wife, Anna Maria of *Östanås bruk* awaited the arrival of an addition to their family. On October 18, August Hjalmar was born, the second child and son, to be followed by six brothers and sisters.

The life of an individual is often influenced by a variety of forces in a family that contribute decisively to the future. Hjalmar Edgren came from a family that possessed both the physical and cultural resources that became important factors in his life. The Edgren family traced its origin directly to Johan Edgren (1724–1789), who took the family name from the parish of Eds on Värmlands Näs in the province of Värmland. Johan Edgren, who was born on a small farm near Mälöga Inn in Eds parish, and his wife, Anna Christina Kjellqvist (1728–1796), from Västergötland, had three sons and one daughter. Johan (1761–1814) was Hjalmar Edgren's grandfather.¹

Johan (Jan) Edgren received a fine education which included studies at the Karlstad elementary school and gymnasium. He was intermittently a student at Lund University from 1784 to 1790 while serving occasionally as a tutor elsewhere. He received the *filosofi magister* title at Lund. Johan Edgren was ordained as a pastor in the Church of Sweden at Karlstad Cathedral in 1790. He served several parishes in Värmland; he was also a teacher at Filipstad and Karlstad, where he became *rektor* of the *Collega Scholae* in 1807. Johan Edgren published several scholarly articles on religious subjects. He was married in September, 1807, to Sara Kristina Svantesson, the daughter of *Prosten* (a rural dean) Nils Wennerlöf (who later took the name of Svantesson) and his wife of Sillerud parish. Axel Hjalmar (1813–1864), Hjalmar Edgren's father, was the youngest of four sons born in this marriage.

Axel Hjalmar Edgren was born in Kölns parsonage in Värmlands län on August 26, 1813. He attended school at Karlstad, in Gunnarskog parish, and at Filipstad. He began a business career at an early age and was extremely successful. His first position was as bookkeeper at the Östanås smelter near Älvsbacka, progressing rapidly to become the manager of the enterprise there and at Bosjön in 1841. He expanded his business activities through ener-

getic effort and careful planning. His marriage with Johanna Mathilda Berger (1817–1878) of Håkanbol, Värmlands *län*, on March 15, 1838, increased the family holdings through the inheritance of one-seventh interest in the sizeable Berger estate at Håkanbol, including property at Lidefors and Dalkarlsberg. Johanna Mathilda Berger, the mother of Hjalmar Edgren, was the fourth child of *Brukspatron* and leading citizen Alex. Berger and Anna Maria Hedrén. The Berger family included several members who were distinguished in the public, financial, and professional life of Sweden.

In 1840, Axel Hjalmar Edgren purchased Agneteberg, the large estate in the Arvika parish of western Värmland. The adjoining estate, Westgård, was acquired by him in 1856. He shared in the future development of that part of Värmland through the formation of a company organized by him in 1856 for draining *Säfsjön*, a sizeable inland sea, through an extensive canal project. This enterprise, which he planned and executed, proved to be a great financial success. Additional financial and public leadership was assumed through his election as chairman of the West Värmlands Savings Bank and chairman of the Arvika communal governing body.

Eight children, five sons and three daughters, formed the family of the Axel Hjalmar Edgrens. They were Johan Alexander (Alexis) (1839–1908), August Hjalmar (1840–1903), Carl Leonard (1843–1862), Axel Albert (1845–1888), Sara Gerda Maria (1847–1876), Anders Gustaf Theodor (1850–1900), Hilda Carolina Mathilda (1854–1889), and Hedvig Anna Ulrika (1856–1892).

The church records for Älvsbacka parish show that the baptism of August Hjalmar, the second of the Edgren children, in October, 1840, was witnessed by parents and distinguished onlookers. Among the sponsors were the Master of the Royal Household, Commander and Knight, the Honorable Carl Dir. Ulr. Croneborg and Baroness, Her Excellency Betty Croneborg, Pastor and Mrs. M. Frykholm, Director Sundin, *Brukspatron* A. A. Berger from Håkanbol, and Mamsell Betty Kjellberg of Tösse.²

The Edgren family moved in 1843 from *Östanås bruk* to the Agneteberg estate which the Edgrens purchased in 1840, the year

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

of Hjalmar's birth. Agneteberg was a beautiful place in the Arvika area of Värmland. Alexis Edgren has described it in his *Minnen* (Memoirs) as follows:

The old white house looked quite stately where it stood, surrounded by old birches. In front of the steps, the flat courtyard spread out with hedges on both sides, with a round garden in the middle; on the other side of the courtyard, between two brightly painted small buildings, the long avenue started, which continued to the beach of a pretty lake. West of the buildings one saw the rather large garden, and to the east, there was a birch and pine forest, which formed a beautiful park on the undulating land. Meadows, fields, forests, and marshes stretched out toward another lake which was about two miles distant.³

A visit to Agneteberg verifies Alexis Edgren's description although the years and decades have produced changes in the area. Agneteberg is a white three-story house approximately sixty-five feet long and forty feet wide and thirty-six feet high. The outer walls with a thickness of twenty inches are made of "*långhalm och lera*," a unique mixture of a native clay product *lera* which is mixed while wet with tough rye straw to form a sturdy substance. Six large windows on the long side of each story made the rooms light and cheerful. The roof is flat stone cut from ledges in the area. Agneteberg faces Kyrkviken, a rather attractive bay which is a part of Glafs fjorden Sea. Two good sized structures, one on each side, provided housing for the supervisor and workers on the Edgren estate.

The Edgren homes at Östanås and Agneteberg identify clearly the fact that Hjalmar Edgren grew up in a very favorable economic and social environment. Axel Hjalmar Edgren, Hjalmar's father, was a distinguished and influential resident of the area. Books, pictures, and musical instruments, together with private tutors, formed important resources in the Edgren household. Hjalmar Edgren profited from this advantageous family background, and his career shows conclusively that he developed effectively the many advantages that came from his family.

Alexis and Hjalmar shared great companionship at Agneteberg as they dreamed dreams and responded with boyhood enthusiasm.

Alexis writes about those happy days:

Early in life a strong lust for adventure possessed us. Great plans were made as we played together. The whole world was included in our nearest surroundings. Seas, oceans, and straits were drawn and constructed; London, Calcutta, and Sydney, Göteborg, and Rio were located; and small mud boats, drying in the sunshine, were soon ready to start on the long journeys, calmly steering a course through lakes and canals on the flat courtyard, and later, these boats pitched up and down on the dangerous oceans provided by the uneven meadows, where, in imagination, the large oceans were located. Some ponds were located near our home. One of them, the deepest one . . . also had coasts with geographical names; and its surface was often adorned with stately sails, especially when playmates from the pastor's home and other places united their fleet of sailboats with those at our home. There were occasions when we tried our own skill at seamanship, when mother's wash-tubs were used. In those giant ships we navigated the dangerous ocean, whose depth we had to measure at times unwillingly by our own length, to the damage of our clothes and confidence. Other extensive journeys were made on the lake's smooth winter surface, when the skates sped forward over the seas with exciting thrills.⁴

The Agneteberg environment offered great variety for Alexis and Hjalmar and their friends. Alexis continues with a description of the halcyon days of boyhood:

But our pleasure was fixed not only on the seas and unknown lands—it was pointed also in another direction. We boys had read in addition to Robinson's sea stories, accounts about war and heroic achievements, and these found a response in our young hearts. We were not satisfied only at being seamen; we must also be warriors. With wooden shields on our left arms and whittled swords in our right hands, we rushed at one another in wild attacks until shield or sword was broken or one or the other of the boys had swollen muscles. Sometimes the battles were carried out more appropriately when mudballs or snowballs provided the winning shots. At times, we united our forces and quartered ourselves in the stone-walled ramparts of the island in the park, and at other places, from whence we made mighty raids through the forests and the nearby fields. Whenever we ran into a growth of

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

nettle, it was attacked as a large number of "Russians," until we stood there as complete conquerors on the field of battle. Then the rule was applied that whoever became burned during the battle must withdraw and consider himself conquered.⁵

The life of Alexis and Hjalmar included the rich world of fantasy at Agneteberg, but the real world also confronted them. Following private instruction in the home, Alexis, ten, and Hjalmar, nine, left Agneteberg in 1849 for enrollment in Karlstad's elementary school, in Värmlands leading city. Alexis recounts their response as they left Agneteberg: "The school was a considerable distance from home, and it did not feel so good to say goodbye in solemn earnest. But that had to be, and with less heroic courage we entered the distant school. We worked hard for a couple of years with Latin and the *Catechism*, together with more interesting and understandable subjects . . . The method of instruction was hardly suited to arouse much love for study." Alexis records the natural response of boys to life at that age: "It looked so masculine to have a cigar in the mouth and to blow the whirling smoke, even if it didn't taste so pleasant. The so-called street boys in the town were the school's declared enemies and it was a kind of Valhalla pleasure to get in a fight with them, although at times quite heated battles were fought." Alexis also described various forms of amusement. Home-made, simple and harmless rockets, propelled by a small amount of powder, were sent from the room high above the street to the surprise of passers-by. Mock battles were fought in the boy's room as tin soldiers were placed in long rows opposite each other, and small cannons, loaded with slate pencils as shells, and propelled by powder, opened battle. As the shots resounded in the room one day, the door was flung open, and a teacher appeared. As he stood there in the midst of the smoke of the battle, he declared: "Mean boys! What are you doing? Do you want to set the building on fire?" The boys had no recourse but to accept the punishment that was meted out.⁶

Hjalmar Edgren was a student at Karlstad school from 1849 to 1851. There is a period of three years before he continued his studies at Stockholm's lyceum (1854–1857) during which interval he likely had private instruction. Alexis, in his *Minnen*, states that

Family and Early Years

after their years at the Karlstad school the paths of the two brothers separated. Alexis went to sea as a young boy. He states that Hjalmar took a position for a brief time with an apothecary, "since his interest in studies had not been greatly aroused." Regardless of the specific time of this employment, Hjalmar soon continued his studies, because he passed the *student examen* at Uppsala University on May 29, 1858, at the age of eighteen. He had now received the basic education which was to serve him well as a distinguished scholar and educator. Moreover, as Alexis writes, the boys "grew up under the influence of loving parents, whose learning and example served to give them a good education and good models for living."⁷

II

Military Service

When Hjalmar Edgren completed his *student examen* at Uppsala in May, 1858, he was confronted with a variety of choices. He was now eligible to begin university studies, and on the basis of his later career, this would have been the normal choice. One factor that may have entered into his decision was that all young men were faced with the responsibility of military service in keeping with Swedish custom and law. On August 8, 1858, he became a volunteer in Värmlands regiment. On August 27, he received the rank of sergeant. He passed the officers' examination on March 2, 1860. The certificate of examination issued by the examination committee of the Fourth Military District, Stockholm, shows that Hjalmar's marks were satisfactory (*godkänd*) in practical mathematics, artillery, topography, musketry, and highly commendable (*godkänd med beröm*) in fortifications, map drawing, and the art of war. However, Hjalmar's service with Värmlands regiment was brief at this time, because on July 25, 1861, he asked for and received a discharge from Värmlands regiment so that he could join the Union army in the American Civil War. A new and vital turning point had come in the life of Hjalmar Edgren.¹

The cause of the Union and the issue of slavery attracted lively attention and concern in Sweden. Great support came to the Union from Swedish Americans immediately after the outbreak of hostilities. Nels Hokanson in his interesting volume, *Swedish*

Immigrants in Lincoln's Time (1942), accounts in detail for more than 3,000 Swedes who fought for the Union, excluding members of the home guard regiments in Illinois, New York, and Minnesota. This is not a complete inventory since it was not possible to identify all the Swedes on the muster rolls. There were approximately 14,000 Swedes in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin at the outbreak of the Civil War. The records show that 2,250 enlisted in the Union army, with Illinois providing 1,300. Colonel Hans Mattson was especially active in Minnesota in recruiting soldiers for the Union army. Many army and navy officers came directly from Sweden to join the Union military services. Captain John Ericsson, a native of Filipstad, Värmland, made a distinguished contribution to the Union victory by creating the famous iron-clad ship, the *Monitor*.²

Hjalmar Edgren was among the Swedes who came directly from Sweden to join the Union armed forces. His reason was clear: "Although there were many factors, the existence or non-existence of slavery became the question of vital importance in the American Civil War, and the battle was primarily a battle between light and darkness."³ Hjalmar Edgren joined Company B of the Ninety-ninth New York State Volunteers. He became a second lieutenant on January 17, 1862. On June 11, 1863, he was promoted to first lieutenant "for meritorious conduct during the siege of Suffolk." From July 7, 1863, he served with the chief of staff and had a position of leadership in the construction of the fortifications of Yorktown. He witnessed the battle of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* from the fortifications of Rip Raps, March 8–9, 1862. He resigned his commission in the United States Army, October 18, 1863, following a serious illness, to return to Sweden.⁴

On March 8, 1862, Lt. Hjalmar Edgren was returning with some other Union officers from Fort Monroe to Rip Raps, the little fort a short distance out in the bay where they were stationed. He found that "the surrounding scenes almost bore the impress of deep peace." The guns on battleships and the forts were in place but "the cannon of these forts and fortifications were silent as in deepest peace, the streamers of the battleships were waving pleasantly in the light spring breezes." Then he wrote: "Suddenly our conversation was interrupted by, 'Look at the frig-

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

ates! What is up?' Soon the key of the riddle is given, 'It is the *Merrimac*'.⁵

Hjalmar Edgren then presented an eye-witness account from Rip Raps. The *Merrimac* attacked the frigate *Cumberland*, which was given a series of blows by the Confederate raider. "The *Merrimac* plunges her ram into the *Cumberland* and rapidly she sinks with wounded, sick, and prisoners. But yet her flag is up, and the waters rise toward the waist of her crew when her last gun speaks defiance." The *Merrimac* turns to the *Congress* which is sunk. Two Union frigates had run ashore and the third had a shaft broken. The *Merrimac* attacked them with the aid of gunboats. When night came, the *Merrimac* withdrew behind the batteries of Sewall's Point.⁶

The events of the next day are described by Lieutenant Edgren:

Thus dawned the day of the 9th of March. Early we were grouped on the parapet around our cannons, spying eagerly toward Sewall's Point and the *Minnesota* yet veiled by a light fog. . . . The thin veil of fog hanging over Sewall's Point is soon dissolved by the rays of day. Then we suddenly perceive three dark shapes issuing from its loosened folds: and the champion of yesterday is easily recognized by his shining mail of iron. Proudly he advances toward his intended prey, paying no notice whatever to the hissing shells we send against him. All of a sudden the tranquil advance of the victor becomes unsteady. What can stagger the invincible one? Can it be that insignificant object just raising its strange form above the surface before the *Minnesota*? . . . Yet it is really the *Monitor* which has come at last, after a trying voyage from New York.⁷

The actual combat is described by the observer from Rip Raps: "Girded with his steel belt, forged by a skillful artificer, this newcomer now proceeds to meet in combat this formidable opponent: A flash of light, followed by the challenging voice of the cannon, proclaims the struggle opened. Soon the two champions are enveloped in clouds of smoke, repeatedly illuminated by sharp flashes. The howling missiles fall with heavy blows on shot-proof armor, or plunge with wild splash into the water. It is soon apparent that the *Monitor* by the power of her skillful construction, can well cope with the *Merrimac*. Then this giant, so unexpectedly

checked, tries to overpower by physical weight the much smaller opponent and sink him in the water.” Lieutenant Edgren then described the final developments:

In full speed the *Merrimac* runs against the side of the *Monitor*. Strong, though staggering, the latter receives this violent onset, and inflicts with his iron belt a deep wound in the breast of his assailant. During several hours this duel is continued. Finally, however, the *Merrimac*, badly crippled, as it is supposed, by one of the stunning blows dealt her by the *Monitor*, takes to the retreat and withdraws, closely pursued by the *Monitor*, behind the batteries of Sewall’s Point, never again to appear in open fight.⁸

There was great rejoicing over the triumph of the *Monitor* at Hampton Roads that March day in 1862. Lt. Hjalmar Edgren was happy over the outcome, but he shared a special feeling of pride as he reflected on the fact that Captain John Ericsson, the creator of the *Monitor* was born in Filipstad, Värmland, only a few miles from Älvsbacka, his own birthplace.

Hjalmar Edgren’s service with the Union army was spent in various sectors of the war in Virginia. After participating in campaigns involving the Ninety-ninth New York regiment, he was camped with Company B in a swampy area near recently captured Norfolk in the spring of 1862. While there he was struck by a severe attack of typhoid fever. He was brought from the camp to a private home, where he lay night and day in a delirious condition. When he recovered, he expressed appreciation to the southern gentleman in whose home he had been quartered. But the man said: “Don’t thank me. It is your attendant, George, whom you must thank. He learned that you were ill and hunted you up, and he has been outside your door day and night, and he has seen to it that you lacked nothing.” Soon George appeared to Hjalmar’s great delight. George was the negro runaway slave whom Hjalmar had found dancing and singing to the point of exhaustion beside a Union army campfire before a group of harassing and jeering Union soldiers. Hjalmar Edgren, the young officer, had stepped out of the shadows; he had stopped the harassment, and in accordance with his right as an officer, he had selected this young run-

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

away slave, George Washington, to be his attendant.⁹

When Hjalmar recovered from typhoid fever, he returned to the battlefield outside of Suffolk, accompanied by George. The Union forces were threatened by a large Confederate army of about 38,000 men under the command of General James Longstreet. Suffolk was a key point in the transportation system because the Petersburg and Norfolk Railway intersected the Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad there. Suffolk was also at the head of the navigation system on the Nansemond River which flows into the St. James River. On April 11, 1863, the Confederates attacked the Union troops. The assault lasted intermittently for twenty-two days until May 4; when General Longstreet's troops retreated during the night to the Blackwater. Company B of the Ninety-ninth New York infantry, in which Hjalmar Edgren was a second lieutenant, was involved in several battles with the Confederates. The contact of his regiment with the enemy continued throughout most of the siege because as late as May 1, his regiment had a battle with Confederate army units on the South Quay road near Suffolk. Edgren, in describing an attack on an enemy position during the siege of Suffolk, wrote that, "Our regiment lost in a few hours in killed and wounded almost one-fourth of its serviceable strength."¹⁰

One of the bright spots in these tragic months was the association of Hjalmar with his brother, Alexis. The newly arrived Swede had the good fortune to receive a pass at Baltimore which permitted him to enter the war zone. The situation is described by Alexis:

Thus I was in the midst of soldiers within the war zone, and here, where danger and death threatened all around, I was looking for my brother. I will never forget that moment when I met him at the fortress Rip Raps near Fort Monroe. It was something deeply touching inside to meet him out there far away from the motherland, among strangers, in the midst of the tumult of a great war, and with great effort I kept back the rushing tears. The reunion, which lasted several days, was most pleasant. We relived our boyhood years and we talked with great confidence about the important current developments.

Alexis, who had had extensive schooling and experience in

the Royal Swedish Navy, soon passed the examination as a Union naval officer. It was the good fortune of the brothers to be stationed near each other. ¹¹

One day in 1863 when Alexis came to Yorktown to visit Hjalmar, he described the following situation: "I found him, but he was sick and emaciated, in a small, whitewashed attic room. During the long siege, much filth had collected in Yorktown and in the surrounding area. The air was polluted with the mass of poorly buried human corpses, dead horses, rotten foodstuffs, etc., that the armies left there. Now our troops, who were still there, suffered unbelievably from the misery in spite of all efforts to overcome it. The regiment in which my brother served had decreased to only 400 men, and of those, only nine could report as capable of serving. The rest were ill, and two to four died every day." Alexis realized the urgency of the situation: "With great agony I saw that there was not much hope remaining for my brother's recovery if he could not be moved from Yorktown. But that could happen only if I could secure his discharge from the service. It was decided, fortunately, that a discharge should be granted." In a short time, Alexis returned to Yorktown to assist Hjalmar in boarding the boat for his departure. He then concluded: "Happy, though terribly weak, he then traveled to New York." ¹²

Hjalmar Edgren, after serving the Union army with distinction, returned to Sweden, following an honorable discharge on October 18, 1863. The first of four periods of life in the United States had come to an end. He was only twenty-three and the future beckoned with new challenges.

When Hjalmar Edgren returned to Sweden following service in the Union army, he joined his old Värmlands regiment and became a second lieutenant on February 9, 1864. The army service was not satisfying to the young man, so in 1867, he received a leave-of-absence in order to study and travel on the continent of Europe. In addition to studying the French language, he was a teacher in German and English at the Pension Brunois at St. Quentin in the academic year 1867-68. He traveled quite extensively in Germany, studying intensively the language and literature of that country. He returned to Sweden in 1869, and on July 6 of that

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

year he became adjutant of the Second Regiment of the Swedish army. But the remembrances of his experience in America, and a desire to study in the country which he had served so well in the Civil War, caused him in August to resign his commission with the Swedish army, effective September 10, 1870. ¹³

III

Academic and Literary Activity 1870-1880

When Hjalmar Edgren resigned his commission in the Swedish army during the late summer of 1870 he was thirty years old. The reasons for his decision to emigrate to America are not fully known. He was undoubtedly exploring alternatives, realizing that there were limitations to a career in the Swedish army. He also had clear remembrances of America from his experiences in the Civil War. This was a time of decision and like a million and more of his countrymen, he chose to emigrate to the United States. He was still young and without family obligations so there was no pressing finality about this second American experience.

Hjalmar Edgren has described the situation when on August 18, 1870, he said goodbye to his mother, other relatives, and friends:

Like so many others I was extremely restless to visit the promised land in the West. Many voices from within and without called me to stay at home, but from over there I was called by the very tempting prospect of realizing many better ideas and of gaining many unusual experiences so that friends and a secure future were exchanged for a foreign country where, without friends and support, an uncertain path must be broken.¹

Following an uneventful voyage from Göteborg to England,

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

Hjalmar boarded the S. S. *Italy* outside of Liverpool on August 26, 1870, as an emigrant to the United States with a ticket in the emigrant class. His description of the emigrants not only reflects his own experience but it provides an interesting portrayal of many other situations as millions of Europeans left relatives and homeland for the uncertain future in the New World:

Hundreds of emigrants, speaking many languages and of varied ages intermingled with one another. Men, women, and children, including among the latter some who were nursing at their mothers' breasts, left the most varied impressions: ignorance and keenness, geniality and impudence, sorrow and joy, apathy and alertness alternated continually amidst the generally ragged and dirty mass of people. Trunks, parcels of food, bags, bed clothing, tin dishes, utensils and other baggage were piled in and heaped up on the ship.²

Hjalmar Edgren also observed the contrast among the nationalities on the emigrant ship:

The Irishman with a lively twinkle in his piercing eyes, with uneven features and quarrelsome mouth, and wearing worn-out clothes, was easily recognized; likewise the German with his round, hospitable countenance and neglected but pretentious pantaloons; the Italian with a dark gleam in his eyes and an extremely light brown velvet suit; and my own countrymen, simple and truly lost but a model in neatness among the carefree and frivolous types of the south. One swears and carries on, another cries and calls goodbye, a third laughs and hits the bottle; a fourth drags his trunk among the crowd, hollering and boisterous; a fifth stands with her half naked and filthy baby sucking at her dirty breast, looking at the scene with frozen dullness in her eyes; a sixth somewhat boldly embraces his sore bespangled donna, and a seventh stands with his arms crossed, sadness in his face and a tear breaking in his eye as he looks at this picture with its undertone of coarseness, neglect, dirt and need.³

As Hjalmar Edgren surveyed this motley scene with its confusion and contradiction, he could not avoid asking the question:

What is the vital force in the American Republic that enables it every week to receive thousands of Europe's most neglected and op-

Academic and Literary Activity, 1870-1880

pressed children and then refashions them in a generation into successful and intelligent citizens who live in a nation governed by the people? The question requires more than a few sentences for an answer, and if I can sometime find the answer, my pilgrimage will not have been in vain.⁴

When the S. S. *Italy* anchored in the harbor at New York on September 7, after a twelve-day voyage from Liverpool, Hjalmar Edgren continued his American experience which had been initiated through service in the Union army during the Civil War. He had gone to America then in the name of freedom for a people whom he felt were oppressed by a social and economic system whose tyranny must be broken. Although it is difficult to be specific as to the reasons why Hjalmar Edgren should come to the United States as an emigrant, one factor is nevertheless obvious: He came to America in order to continue his education, although it would have been more normal to have enrolled at Lund or Uppsala. There were no family or personal problems that confronted him. He was leaving something quite sure and certain for the insecurity and uncertainty of America which he knew only limitedly within the important but restricted arena of service in the Civil War. There is always an area of puzzlement about the life of all men and women, and there was much of this quality in Hjalmar Edgren. Later developments show a great degree of restlessness. Perhaps this spirit together with the promise of the future caused him to be one of the 15,430 Swedes who emigrated to America in 1870.⁵

For reasons that are not known, Hjalmar Edgren enrolled at newly founded Cornell University at Ithaca, New York, in 1870. His general cultural background, especially in languages and literature, and his native intelligence and will to achieve, enabled him to complete the requirements for the bachelor of philosophy degree in one year. In contrast with his future professional career as a distinguished linguist, Hjalmar's emphasis at Cornell was in physical sciences. The year at Cornell was spent primarily in the laboratories, enriching his knowledge of science; his general education in languages, literature, and history was quite adequate for the degree requirements. After completing the baccalaureate degree at Cornell, he spent the academic year 1871-1872 as a science teacher in

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

Otis Bisbee's Military Academy at Riverview-on-the-Hudson, where he also served as commandant and drill master of the cadets.⁶

In the autumn of 1872, at the age of thirty-two, Hjalmar chose languages as the field for his professional career. His linguistic studies in Sweden, France, and Germany had given him a useful background in modern languages. However, when he enrolled at Yale in 1872, he entered primarily into new linguistic fields. The field of language study in which he was destined to become internationally known was Sanskrit. He joined three other students under the tutelage of the famous Sanskrit scholar, Professor W. D. Whitney. Professor L. A. Sherman, himself a Yale man, has described Hjalmar's situation during his first year at Yale:

Unusual difficulties beset the path Hjalmar Edgren had undertaken at Yale. For a dozen years, probably indeed since finishing his gymnasium studies in 1858, matters of grammatic detail had been foreign to him. Those with whom he worked were fresh from the Greek and Latin drill of undergraduate courses. From the start he worked out everything at the bottom in black and white, making for each exercise fifteen or twenty pages of notes in his minute and elegant hand. At first his memory could not hold the multiplicity of forms. But in a few weeks he grasped them, and seldom referred to his voluminous memoranda. He enrolled for work in Greek tragedy, and also in some advanced Latin courses, and found himself much handicapped, in extended translation, because of a somewhat unready command of the vernacular. But he struggled into equal proficiency with his comrades in all tasks, which so held him that for a considerable period he skipped his sleep every other night. He added Gothic, Old French and Anglo-Saxon, no one of them trivial subjects, *Beowulf* being dispatched in a dozen exercises.⁷

Professor Sherman has described the great progress which Hjalmar made in his years at Yale. The requirements for the doctor of philosophy degree were completed in 1874 with a dissertation entitled, "On the Vowel Increase in the French Verb." His unusual ability in Sanskrit made it possible for him to grasp the style and content of the great play *Shakuntala*, by Kalidasa (c. A.D. 400), so effectively that he produced a fine Swedish translation of this great Indian classic. Kalidasa is known as the most

distinguished author in classical Sanskrit literature. This translation was published in Göteborg in 1875, the first of many scholarly publications. It was republished in 1927 in the anthology of world's literature, *Världslitteratur, De stora mästerverkan*.

Edgren translated into Swedish two other works by Kalidasa, *Mölnbudet*, a great lyrical poem (1875), and *Malavika*, a play (1877). In 1880, P. Norstedt and Sons, the well-known Stockholm publisher, made available his translation of *Nala-Sagan* (163 pages), a famous Indian poem. In the same year, the *Journal of The American Oriental Society* published his article, "On the relation of the *Rig-Veda* between the Palatal and the Labial Vowels and their Corresponding Sensivowels." In 1877, the same journal had published his article, "Contributions to the History of Verb Inflections in Sanskrit."

Edgren completed during his Yale years what Professor Sherman has described as, "his most important contribution to philology, namely an inspection and sifting of the verbal roots of the Sanskrit language and of the Sanskrit grammarians, involving hardly less than the overhauling and correction of the great St. Petersburg Sanskrit dictionary. Out of thousands of roots authenticated by native authority, Dr. Edgren settled upon 840 as historically genuine." This important study, "On the Verbal Roots of the Sanskrit Language and the Sanskrit Grammarians," was published by the American Oriental Society in 1878.⁸

Although Hjalmar Edgren was heavily involved in the translation and study of Sanskrit literary classics, the great range of his scholarly and literary interests is demonstrated by his other publications. In 1878, an important volume, *Ur Amerikas skönlitteratur: Teckningar och öfversättningar* (Selections from American literature: Comments and Translation) was published in Sweden by Gumperts, Göteborg. This 427-page volume contained representative selections of the poetry of Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier, Lowell, Poe, Aldrich, and Holmes, and prose selections of Holmes, Irving, Channing, Emerson, Hawthorne, Webster, and Phillips.

A translation of *Evangeline* by Longfellow (72 pages) was published in Sweden in 1875. When Edgren had completed the translation in 1872, a manuscript copy was sent to Longfellow. The response of the distinguished American author was a letter to

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

the translator from Cambridge, Massachusetts, on June 13: "I am extremely obligated to you for the honor you have done me in translating into Swedish my poem of 'Evangeline,' and most cordially thank you for sending me your manuscript." Longfellow then appraised Hjalmar Edgren's translation: "I have looked it over with great *pleasure* and *satisfaction* though I have not had time to compare it critically with the original. It seems to be extremely well done; very faithful and well versified. I sincerely congratulate you on your success." Longfellow was well-versed in the Swedish language and had translated into English some poems of Tegnér. The latter was enthusiastic about the high quality of Longfellow's translation of excerpts of the great classic, *Frithiofs Saga*.⁹

Hjalmar Edgren's publications were varied in this period. A new area of study produced his volume, *Förenta Staternas folkskolor och högre lärosäten*, a 105-page study of American schools and universities published at Uppsala in 1879. Viktor Rydberg's classic work, *Medeltidens magi*; or, *The Magic of the Middle Ages*, was translated by Edgren from Swedish to English, and published by Henry Holt and Company in New York in 1879, in a 231-page edition. The Swedish American scholar also edited with notes the German work, *Lustspiel in einem aufzuge* by C. A. Görner, which was published in New York in 1878. His article, "The Kindred Words of German and English Exhibited with Reference to their Consonant Relations" appeared in the *Transactions of the American Philological Association* in 1880.

Professor Whitney, who had been attracted by Edgren's unusual knowledge of German, invited him to be the chief collaborator in preparing a German-English dictionary which had been in the planning stage for a considerable period of time. Most of the work was done by Edgren. The strain of the dictionary project was so great that he developed a serious illness which came near proving fatal. It was reported that "for days the sufferer lay in delirium, muttering German roots and wrestling with etymologic problems." But Hjalmar's fine physical resources enabled him to overcome this crisis. The dictionary was published in New York and London in 1877 with the title, *A Compendious German and English and English and German Dictionary*.¹⁰

Academic and Literary Activity, 1870-1880

The career of Hjalmar Edgren at Yale included a teaching assignment in languages in the College and in the Sheffield Scientific School. He was designated by Professor Whitney to teach his classes in Sanskrit and linguistics during the academic year 1878-1879, while the distinguished senior professor had a leave-of-absence. The combination of teaching, research, and publication during the Yale years is a tribute to Hjalmar Edgren's talent and energy.

When Hjalmar Edgren returned to Sweden in 1880, to accept an academic assignment as a *docent* at Lund University, he had completed an amazingly productive decade in the United States. He had earned the doctor of philosophy degree at Yale; he had taught languages at Yale; he had been primarily responsible for producing a comprehensive German-English dictionary; he had translated several Indian classics from Sanskrit to Swedish and representative selections of American literature from English to Swedish; he had translated and edited a Swedish literary work into English. He returned to his native Sweden in 1880 for a second time in the full knowledge of a decade of distinguished achievement in the country which claimed his time and talent on four different occasions.



*Lieut. Hjalmar Edgren
Union Army Officer
(1861-1863)*



*Swedish Army Officer
(1864-1870)*

Marianne
(Mrs. Hjalmar Edgren)



Anna



Verna



Arthur



Prof. Hjalmar Edgren



*The Edgren Home
Lincoln, Nebraska*



Agneteberg—Hjalmar Edgren's Boyhood Home



Villa Ektomte—The Edgren Home outside Stockholm

IV

Lund and the University of Nebraska

Hjalmar Edgren's decision in 1880 to accept the call to teach at Lund University was a natural response to a variety of factors. Lund was a distinguished university in his native country to which he brought outstanding credentials as a scholar. Moreover, Edgren came to Lund to be associated with Professor Esaias Tegnér, the grandson of the famous Swedish poet, who had become professor of oriental languages in 1879, following fourteen years as a *docent* at Lund. The combined talent of Tegnér and Edgren provided Lund with unusual distinction in the field of oriental languages and literature as well as philology.

Although academic considerations were important, this aspect was transcended by a more vital personal factor. Hjalmar Edgren had fallen in love with Anna Marianne Steendorff from Copenhagen, daughter of Christian Steendorff, a Danish artist, and his wife, the former Anna Öhrström. It is possible that Hjalmar met Marianne when he returned to Sweden in the summer of 1877 to represent Yale at the four-hundredth jubilee observance of the founding of Uppsala University. In August, 1877, he wrote to Sven August Hedlund: "During my visit in Sweden this summer I have seriously begun to think about returning to my fatherland in order to find a position. Among other possibilities, I have reflected on the possibility of seeking a post with a newspaper, but since I am not familiar with the possibilities, I am bold enough to turn to

you to inquire if you will share your thoughts with me relative to the prospects.”¹ Hjalmar Edgren’s interest in journalism may have been stimulated by the fact that Viktor Rydberg, the poet who was a great influence on him, had joined the staff of *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*. No evidence is available as to Hedlund’s reply to Edgren, although it seems likely that he encouraged him to stay with his academic and scholarly career.

In April, 1879, Hjalmar Edgren wrote to Professor Esaias Tegnér at Lund making inquiry about the possibility of receiving a teaching position in languages at the university. He apparently returned to Sweden again in the summer of 1879, and the course of developments are set forth in a letter to Professor August Wijkander from New Haven, Conn., in October, 1879: “I became engaged to be married during my visit in Sweden, but these plans can be realized only if I return home. . . . My fiancée’s parents will not permit her to follow me out here under any circumstances, although I have a very advantageous economic status.” Hjalmar indicated that Professor Tegnér had promised him a *docent’s* position at Lund, but this appointment, although prestigious, would not support the young couple. The situation was then described to Wijkander: “As a *docent* I will naturally have no salary at the outset, but I can count on having an income of 2,000 kronor from a small sum I have gathered from the sale of a dictionary which a colleague and I have published. Do you think that this will be enough to support us at the beginning?”² The arrangements for being a *docent* at Lund were confirmed by a letter which Edgren received from Tegnér on June 16, 1880.

Hjalmar Edgren resigned his position on the faculty of Yale and returned to Sweden. On October 12, 1880, he married Anna Marianne Steendorff at *Vor Frue Kirke* in Copenhagen. Hjalmar was forty years old and Marianne was twenty-seven.

Edgren’s years at Lund were occupied with his teaching and scholarly responsibilities at the university, but he also served as a teacher (1881–1885) in Lund’s *realskola*. In 1883, Edgren was awarded the Norberg Prize of Lund University for his essay, “Quelques observations sur l’élément roman de l’anglais, considéré dans ses rapports au français moderne.” In the summer of 1882, he was at Berlin University, studying the Zend language.³

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

The amount of scholarly productivity during his Lund years is remarkable. The studies, research, and publications in Sanskrit, initiated at Yale, were continued at Lund. The volume, *Sanskrit-språkets formlära, jämte kort öfversikt af Prakritdialekten samt inledande läsöfningar* (264 pages), published by Gleerup, Lund, in 1883, was a comprehensive study of certain aspects of Sanskrit and its dialects. In 1885, an English translation, *A Compendious Sanskrit Grammar with a Brief Sketch of Scenic Prakrit* (178 pages), was published by Trübner in London. Four scholarly articles dealing with Indian literature and culture were published in this field during this period: "Statistical and Discursive Notes on Vriddhi Derivatives in Sanskrit" (1881), "Buddhismen, dess uppkomst och lära (1883), and "Indiens sagor på vandring i världen" (1884); one article in the Sanskrit field was published in Germany: "S. Sörensens Om Mahābhāratas stillning i den Indiske litteratur" (1884).⁴ These publications, together with those previously published in the United States, witness to the international recognition of Edgren in this field of scholarship.

The general and scholarly publications of the Lund period show in an interesting manner Hjalmar Edgren's attachment to America. He became a splendid interpreter and promoter of American literature in his native country. An article in the well-known periodical, *Ny Svensk tidskrift*, in 1882, was devoted to an interpretation of the poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Not only were the Swedes informed by Edgren about American literature, but in 1883 he described the status of Swedish literature in America in the article, "Svensk litteratur i America" in the pages of *Ny Svensk tidskrift*. Swedish readers in 1883 were given a first-hand account of the victory of John Ericsson's *Monitor* over the *Merrimac* in a detailed article in *Nordisk tidskrift*, "En av John Ericssons triumfer." Earlier, in 1883, he published in Stockholm a beginners book on learning the English language, *Nybörjarens lärobok i engelska språket*. This was an expansion of the volume *Praktisk och enkel lärobok i Engelska språket* which had been published in Stockholm in 1869.

Although Hjalmar Edgren was occupied with teaching and scholarly productions, the first of three volumes of his poetry was also published during this period. *Dikter i original och*

Lund and the University of Nebraska

öfversättning contained twenty-nine of his poems in the Swedish language and selections in Swedish translation of the poetry of Longfellow, Burns, Poe, and Tennyson. The anthology included some poems written during his most recent years in America. Gleerup of Lund was the publisher in 1884.⁵

The Lund years, amidst teaching and writing, included for Hjalmar Edgren the resources of a happy family life. Marianne was delighted to be in Lund, which was so close to her old home and her family in Copenhagen. Anna Mathilda, the Edgren's first of three children, was born in Copenhagen on July 4, 1881. Arthur was born in Lund on March 24, 1884. Although Hjalmar was fully occupied with his exacting academic activities, he was always a good father and husband, who managed to give much time to his family. These were happy years for Marianne, quite unlike periods during the Edgren's later residence in Nebraska, when intense longing for the homeland and difficulty in adjusting to the Great Plain's climate and to certain aspects of life in America, caused her considerable uneasiness and anxiety.

A survey of Hjalmar Edgren's five years in Lund, 1880–1885, indicates that it was reasonable to expect that Hjalmar, now forty-five, had established a pattern of life that would be devoted to teaching, creative writing, and scholarly pursuits at prestigious Lund University. His family provided him a gratifying home life. His scholarly productivity was extensive; his poetry was being published; students were responding wholeheartedly to his excellent teaching; he had the intellectual stimulation that came from his association with Professor Esaias Tegnér and other academic colleagues. When Edgren left Lund in 1885 to accept a position at the newly established University of Nebraska at Lincoln, there must have been great puzzlement among his academic friends and associates at Lund. The contrast between his well-established life at Lund and the uncertainty of the pattern at Lincoln, which was virtually a pioneer city founded only fifteen years earlier, was indeed great.

It is difficult to ascertain definitely the reasons that motivated Hjalmar Edgren to leave Lund with his wife, four-year-old daughter, and infant son to begin the long journey to the plains of Nebraska. A variety of factors must have entered into the decision.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

The prospects for academic advancement may have seemed limited, since under the normal arrangement of a Swedish university it seemed unlikely that another professorship would be created to supplement the field in which Professor Tegnér, who had become a member of the Swedish Academy in 1882, was destined to be active until 1908. That this was a factor is cited by Hjalmar Edgren in a letter to Sven August Hedlund in November, 1889: "Since the prospect for advancement in my field of study in Sweden seemed all too uncertain, I accepted the invitation to become professor of Sanskrit and modern European languages at the State University of Nebraska."⁶ Hjalmar Edgren's experience as an officer in the Union army during the Civil War and his decade of residence in America, 1870–1880, at Cornell and at Yale, had enabled him to assess American life through active involvement in it. He liked what he had seen and known. The University of Lund constituted a rather closed society. Obviously, Hjalmar Edgren and his charming wife were not excluded from it, but it has been suggested that he found it increasingly unacceptable. One observer has written: "Edgren was not happy at Lund because the rank and class distinctions which he hated were perhaps more severe there than in a large city."⁷ Perhaps there was a strong feeling for freedom in him then as there had been earlier when he left the security of peaceful Sweden to fight as a soldier in the Civil War. Whatever the motivation, the Edgrens left the historic and charming university city of Lund in 1885 to build a new life in the faraway town of Lincoln.

The decision to accept the position at the University of Nebraska had been made after serious consideration. The records at Lincoln show that Hjalmar was there in April, 1885, for a conference and the exploration of various aspects of the position at the University of Nebraska. The importance of the long trip from Lund to Lincoln was described in a letter to Professor August Wijkander from Taffelburg in July, 1885: "I am now at home making preparations for bringing my family to our new home in America, where I was able to reconnoitre during the last term. I found the prospects excellent."⁸

When Hjalmar and Marianne and their two small children, Anna and Arthur, arrived in Lincoln, a new phase in their lives began. On January 5, 1886, Hjalmar reported on the situation in a

letter to Professor Wijkander:

We are all feeling well and we are well-established in Nebraska. I arranged during the summer to have a house built for us, a villa with nine rooms and a bathroom and the house was almost ready for occupancy so we could move in. It is a very beautiful house with the ordinary American comforts together with a garden where I now have the pleasure of planning and working with the result that my books are resting too much for practical purposes. The climate is most excellent, but the higher altitude is perhaps too demanding for Marianne. She has not, sad to say, as yet become accustomed to remain inside the house here. She is homesick, and if it really continues to bother her, I may pull up stakes here. I have it very good here from an economic standpoint, and the children and I thrive here, although I always have love for Sweden that I am not anxious to quench.⁹

Dr. J. Irving Manatt, the chancellor of the University of Nebraska, reported to the regents in November, 1886, that Hjalmar Edgren had entered upon his duties as professor of modern languages, following his appointment in April, 1885, stating that, "Professor Edgren brought to the University a reputation for wide and critical as well as remarkably productive scholarship, together with a large experience as a teacher in two famous Universities (Yale and Lund). In consideration of his eminence as an Oriental scholar, and with a view to broadening the range of philological instruction in the University, the style and scope of his chair was made to include Sanskrit. His work has been most acceptable, and will grow in value as the institution takes on more the character of a university." The "Regents Report" for 1886 re-emphasized the chancellor's high evaluation of Hjalmar Edgren in observing that, "By this choice the University gains a representative of the ripest scholarship of Europe."¹⁰

The contrast between well-established Lund University, founded in 1666, and the relatively new University of Nebraska, which welcomed the first students in the academic year 1871–1872, was indeed great. No twin-spired Romanesque cathedral or historic university buildings as in the city of Lund, which was founded in the eleventh century by Canute the Great, King of Denmark and

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

England, were found in the sprawling prairie town of Lincoln. The university situation in Lincoln during the early years has been described as follows:

The original campus covered four city blocks. Until 1886 University Hall was the sole edifice. The campus differed little in appearance from the prairie about it for a number of years. Citizens tethered their family cows on it. . . . Graveled walks led from the streets to the buildings, and the grounds were partially enclosed at one time by a board fence.¹¹

Although the physical facilities of the university were limited, Hjalmar Edgren shared with his colleagues great enthusiasm for the promise of the future. Edgren was impressed also by the ability and dedication of Chancellor J. Irving Manatt, and Professors Charles E. Bessey, L. A. Sherman, and Laurence Fossler. He brought magnificent education and experience to the university, and that his talents were appreciated is apparent from Chancellor Manatt's comments quoted above. Moreover, the newly arrived Swedish professor had well-conceived plans for the future of the study of languages and an educational philosophy that was meaningful. Since these factors reflect certain aspects generally of Hjalmar Edgren's career, it is appropriate to consider them in detail.

Hjalmar Edgren's view of his responsibility is stated in his first report as a professor of languages to the Chancellor of the University at the end of his first academic year, 1885-1886. In the opening statement he wrote:

If it be admitted that the teaching of languages in an institution of university scope should aim, if not exclusively, at least pre-eminently, to affect the whole mental training of the student, to develop his critical and comparative faculties as well as his literary and philosophical insight, the position to be taken in the conflict between various methods of teaching can hardly be doubtful. Much that is one-sided, wasteful and pedantic, in the purely analytical method where it is made its own end, may indeed, profitably be discarded, and much that is excellent in the purely empirical or 'natural' method adopted. But that

Lund and the University of Nebraska

the staple of instruction should be analytical and not empirical, that it should appeal to the student's reason rather than to his imitative faculty of his memory alone, will, I suppose, be generally granted by any one who admits that effort in acquiring and judgment in application develops strength, while easy-going, superficial work demoralizes, no matter how showy the results, and that even modern languages should become one of the serious studies of the college curriculum and contribute their share to a true *studium humanitatis*.¹²

Hjalmar Edgren, in this rather lengthy statement identified further the chief aims of language instruction in accordance with the above principles. In the elementary courses, the student should receive "a firm grasp of the leading principles of the language studied, by comprehensive reading—where grammatical interpretation is a means, but in no wise an end, to translate with comparative ease and critical accuracy, and finally, to inculcate, as far as circumstances allow, an ability to pronounce with unhesitating correctness." There were also certain "accessory aims," which included the attempt "to convey to the student some fruitful knowledge of the historical growth of the language studied and its relation to English, sound appreciation of the literature read, and some familiarity with the spoken idiom, the latter being gradually introduced as a means of communication in the class." Edgren then concluded by observing that, "In the advanced or elective courses, literary or practical training is chiefly designed, one course in reading and one in speaking and composition being offered at the option of the student. In the post graduate course, purely cultural and philological ends are alone considered."¹³

The response of the students to Hjalmar Edgren's program of studies and teaching was heartening. Professor Laurence Fossler, a colleague, has written:

When Edgren came to Nebraska in 1885, the modern languages soon became a favorite study with the student body. His classes were crowded. Graduate work was gradually being encouraged and developed. The opportunity to lay broad and deep foundations for linguistic and humanistic studies were taken full advantage of.¹⁴

The enrollment statistics verify Professor Fossler's evaluation.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

In Edgren's first report, the enrollment in the elective classes in German was five and in French it was three. In 1888, the comparable statistics were 30 and 12. Moreover, in the latter year the enrollment in regular classes in German was 140 and in French, 88. There were fifteen students of Italian, seven in Spanish, one in Sanskrit, and one in Hebrew. The interest mounted with increased enrollments so that in 1890, Edgren urged that the Department of Modern Languages be divided into a Department of Romance Languages. Edgren's teaching load was exacting. His assignment mounted from seventeen hours per week at the outset to twenty-two hours per week in 1890.¹⁵

The strenuous life of Hjalmar Edgren during the academic year was lightened considerably by his participation in the famous Chautauqua Assembly in New York state during the summers of 1886 and 1887. In a letter to his friend, Professor Wijkander, in August, 1887, his general situation and the Chautauqua assignment are discussed:

My situation in America has been good from the beginning but it has steadily become more promising. My salary is now 8,000 kronor and it quite likely will be 10,000 kronor in two years, and I am greatly pleased with my position. I was engaged last summer at the large summer school at Chautauqua as an experiment and it has resulted in a permanent position each summer so that my family and I can spend the summer in an unusually interesting and beautiful district in the State of New York and I receive good compensation for comparatively light work.¹⁶

The Chautauqua assignment consisted of lectures on language and literature. He was associated with outstanding scholars from leading colleges and universities. This was a stimulating experience and a delightful change from the normal routine.

Although Hjalmar Edgren was involved in a full teaching schedule during the Lincoln years, he found time to produce several publications. Included were three articles in *Ny Svensk tidsskrift* (Stockholm) "Om Amerikas fornminnen" (1885), which described prehistoric times in America, "En ung stad och en ung stat ute på Amerikas prärier" (1886), an account of the founding and development of Lincoln and Nebraska, and "Chautauquarörelsen,"

(1886), a description of the program of the Chautauqua Assembly. In *Nordisk tidskrift* (Stockholm) two articles by Edgren portrayed views relative to the original home and culture of the Indo-European people in "Skilda åsikter rörande de indoeuropeiska folkens ursprungliga hem ock kultur" (1886), and a discussion of the metaphorical language of old India in "Det gamla Indiens bildspråk och bildspråk i allmänheten" (1887). He continued his studies of Sanskrit with an article, "On the Propriety of Retaining Eight Verb-classes in Sanskrit," which appeared in the *University of Nebraska Studies* in 1888. The classroom experience of Edgren in languages furnished the evidence of the need for better textbooks. In 1890, Henry Holt and Company published his book, *A Compendious French Grammar with Historical Introduction and Exercises*. The next year the same publishers produced his, *An Elementary Spanish Grammar with Historical Notations and Exercises*. In 1889 he had spent the summer in Mexico studying the language and culture of that country.

The years moved on as the Edgrens established themselves in Lincoln. In November, 1887, Hjalmar reported to Professor Wijkander that, "Little Anna has just suffered a touch of scarlet fever but so light that it has not left the slightest damage." He told his friend that his wife and the children would spend next summer in Copenhagen, but his assignment at the Chautauqua Assembly would keep him in America. He expressed his delight with the university and Lincoln but he confided to his friend that, "My final objective is and ever will be old Sweden and I am beginning to experience the truth of the declaration that we become conservative as we become older."¹⁷ In November, 1889, he wrote to S. A. Hedlund at Göteborg:

I enjoy it out here, as much as one can enjoy a country when one's heart is attached at the same time to his homeland. Lincoln is a very beautiful, lively, and progressive city with 60,000 inhabitants although it is only twenty-two years old, and our university is growing with the city and the state. We already have grants which are not less than those of Uppsala University, and we have quite substantial buildings. I own my own home here and we have two children who, although born on the other side of the ocean, are fully Americanized and have started to go to school here.¹⁸

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

Although Hjalmar Edgren was achieving fine success as a professor and scholar, the winds of change were beginning to blow upon him and his family which were destined to change the residence of the Edgrens. Letters came from friends in Göteborg, especially from Professor August Wijkander and S. A. Hedlund, about plans for opening *Göteborgs Höghskola*. Hjalmar expressed interest in a position in the new institution. Marianne was homesick for Scandinavia. Moreover, Hjalmar had never firmly determined that his future would be in the United States.

On June 7, 1890, a telegram came to Professor Edgren stating that he had been appointed professor of modern languages at *Göteborgs Höghskola* effective in September, 1891, with an initial salary of 5,000 kronor per year. In a letter to Professor Wijkander regarding plans to return to Sweden he wrote: "I don't have to say that Marianne is beyond herself with joy." Since the term "university" in Sweden implies the availability of facilities in law, medicine, theology, and the arts and sciences, the term *höghskola* identifies an institution that provides university level studies but not in all the faculties required for a university. In December, 1890, Edgren informed the regents of the University of Nebraska that he was leaving the university at the end of the current academic year. His letter of resignation, which was accepted with reluctance, contained detailed recommendations for strengthening the program of studies and instruction in modern languages.¹⁹

The Edgrens shared busy days and weeks in preparation for the return to Sweden. Hjalmar's affairs at the university were concluded in an orderly fashion amidst great regrets among his colleagues. His personal affairs, involving property and real estate of a considerable amount, were arranged through a sale involving a down payment and additional payments at regular intervals. In the spring of 1891 the Edgrens were enroute to a new life in Göteborg.

V

The Years at Göteborg 1891-1893

Hjalmar Edgren was thrilled with the prospect of the new opportunity in Sweden. In November, 1889, in a letter to S. A. Hedlund, editor of *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*, and a leader in promoting the establishment of a *högskola* at Göteborg, Edgren wrote: "I congratulate you that finally, as I read in the newspapers, you are close to the goal of establishing the *högskola* at Göteborg. May it become a great blessing for our people and an honor for the beautiful city where it shall be established." In February, 1891, he shared with Hedlund his enthusiasm for returning to Sweden: "It will be strange for me to change positions again. Since in the meantime my love for Sweden has never abated, I have accepted the invitation to Göteborg with great joy, although it involves a real economic sacrifice. I hope that I will have occasion to be pleased with the decision."¹

Hjalmar Edgren then set forth in the same letter to Hedlund his hopes for the future: "I accepted the opportunity at *Göteborgs Högskola* with great enthusiasm because it could contribute to developing a lively interest in scholarly studies in the history of language, which in itself carries such great promise for the future. That Sanskrit is one of my principal subjects can only be satisfying to me since it gives me both cause and opportunity to base my lectures in Germanic philology on the Indo-European sources. It is my intention through seminars to go through the Indo-European

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

sources (Sanskrit, Greek, Latin) and tie them in with the Germanic (Gothic, Old Norse, Anglo-Saxon, and Old German). . . . Such a program will demand much effort, but I have been preparing for it during the year and I will be able to carry it out.”²

Interesting background factors made possible the establishment of *Göteborgs Högskola* in 1891. These developments were traced in detail in the lecture that Hjalmar Edgren, recently elected *rector*, presented at the inauguration of the institution on September 14, 1891. Edgren pointed out that a key factor historically was *Göteborgs Kungliga Vetenskaps- och Vitterhets Samhälle*, founded in Göteborg a hundred years earlier. As early as 1841, the society had provided for public lectures. Moreover, the society had assembled a substantial collection of books which were made available for the new institution. Hjalmar Edgren pointed out in his address that in December, 1871, the municipal council of Göteborg decided that “the annual income from 35,000 kronor should be designated for an instructional fund that should promote the goal of higher education in Göteborg.” This fund accumulated until 1891 and was presented to the *Högskola* as a “Fund for Humanistic Studies.” Several individuals, including S. A. Hedlund, Ch. Dickson, A. W. Björck and others, worked steadily for the establishment of the new institution.³

Hjalmar Edgren further emphasized the importance of the action recommended to the Göteborg Municipal City Council on February 5, 1885, by S. A. Hedlund, Professor August Wijkander, and others to proceed with the establishment of an institution of higher education. On November 10, 1887, the council voted thirty-five to fifteen that *Göteborgs Högskola* should be established. In June, 1890, the Board of Directors made provision for seven professors. Professor Axel Kock had been elected *rector* in January, 1891, but at his request he left the post in July in favor of Edgren.⁴

It was a festive occasion, as reported in *Göteborgs Handels- och sjöfarts-tidning*, when a large crowd assembled on September 15, 1891, in the large lecture hall of the old *realskola* which was gaily decorated with a bust of King Oscar II, Swedish flags, the coat of arms of the city of Göteborg, a multitude of beautiful flowers, and photos of benefactors Edvard Magnus, David Car-

negie, Fredrik Lundgren, and Oscar Ekman, to witness the opening of the institution of higher learning. The Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education of the Swedish cabinet, Gunnar Wennerberg, Landshövding Gustaf Fredrik Snoilsky of Göteborgs och Bohuslän, Bishop Edvard Rhode, and president of the Municipal Council O. Wijk, the mayor of Göteborg, and Professor Hjalmar Edgren constituted the officials who were followed to the platform by the Board of Directors and the faculty of the new institution. Cabinet Minister Wennerberg presided, and declared the *Göteborgs Högskola* inaugurated with the declaration that the “new institution now opens her new arms with love to those who wish to educate themselves to higher pursuits.” The distinguished Swedish leader then introduced *Rector* and Professor Hjalmar Edgren to present the principal address on this festive occasion.⁵

There was not only silence but also a feeling of expectancy as the well-known scholar, poet, educator, and three times American resident mounted the podium to make an important historic address. There seemed to be a cultural bridge between Sweden and the United States as the former Union army soldier, Yale and Nebraska University professor faced the audience of dignitaries in the academic setting of the Old World. The listeners were not disappointed as Hjalmar Edgren shared with them his and their hopes for the infant institution.

Hjalmar Edgren’s logical point of departure was to remind his hearers of the purpose of *Göteborgs Högskola*: “Our *Högskola*’s mission is clearly stated thus in the first paragraph of its constitution: ‘*Göteborgs Högskola* has as its mission to present scholarly instruction and to promote scholarly research.’ ” He then proceeded to interpret the implications of that mission:

Scholarly or higher instruction as even the name *högskola* fortunately proclaims and as the presence of knowledge-seeking young people naturally implies, is her imperative call. This instruction shall further be directed toward preparing the students for the same examinations as at the national universities. This goal is of far-reaching significance for the institution’s entire status. It opens up the possibility for a large number of students, it places the institution in more immediate union with the community, not to say with the interests of the nation,

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

and it brings her into a healthful relationship and association with the nation's universities. The right of examination is thus for her, as already suggested, a condition of life, if her life shall be what it ought to be, and must be, her '*Praeterea censeo*' until this goal is reached. Earnest, sacrificial work is here like everywhere the surest means for the future attainment of this goal.⁶

Rektor Edgren then described another important role for the institution: "Scholarly instruction is meanwhile not the *högskola's* only mission. Side by side with this mission stands one of no less significance, namely scholarly research. . . . What may possibly be lost through the union of the two objectives, which prevents complete devotion to the objective of research, is compensated for by the infusion of living discourse before an enlightened group of listeners which the personal contact between teacher and pupil can so readily arouse." Edgren emphasized, however, that the teaching assignment must be restricted so that the professor would not be unduly handicapped in his research achievements.⁷

Hjalmar Edgren's understanding of the role of academic freedom for faculty and students was clearly expressed in his inaugural address: "The desire to do research is best promoted when it is not quenched by crippling regimentation which, without regard for natural inclination and desire, fetters the mature man or woman of sensitive spirit with too prescriptive regulations and personal demands. Freedom to teach and to do research are imperative in the interest of scholarship. The learning of Greece grew in free soil. Rome's discipline and the dogmatism of the Middle Ages clipped the wings of free research." Moreover, "no discipline shall be placed upon students except that for reprehensible conduct, disobedience towards superiors and teachers, or neglect of studies, students may be given a warning, or in exceptional cases be placed on probation or excluded from the institution." Edgren emphasized that "*Göteborgs Högskola* was for both men and women, that extension courses would be provided, and that opportunity for study would be available for those who had not yet completed the requirements for entrance to university level studies. The *rektor* emphasized the role of education for women by citing developments in the United States, and the importance of extension

classes by referring to the experience in England. Costs of instruction would be inexpensive since the only charges were a matriculation fee of ten kronor and a term fee of five kronor.⁸

The address was concluded effectively with these vital declarations:

The above account shows that *Göteborgs Högskola* now begins its work under favorable conditions. Her roots lie deep in a greatly interested community; her resources are already considerable; her relationship with the Swedish government is such that it presupposes the confidence from this source that she desires; her statutes are permeated with the liberal spirit; and her future is hallowed by service to higher learning and scholarship. Above all, the *Högskola's* own earnestness, diligence, enlightened scholarship, and harmonious will must be the life principle of these happy conditions. If these prevail, then the seed planted with hearty expectations will most certainly grow as an honor for the fatherland and above all for Gustaf Adolphus' historic city.⁹

The minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors of *Göteborgs Högskola* and related documents show conclusively the earnestness with which Hjalmar Edgren carried out his responsibilities as *rektor*. His first attendance at a meeting of the Board of Directors occurred on August 25, 1891, when the chairman of the board welcomed him most cordially and expressed the desire of the board for a long and pleasant relationship. Meetings were generally held twice each month. The complete records at *Landsarkivet* (regional archives) in Göteborg reveal, at least in a measure, the great effort and time that Hjalmar Edgren expended on administrative duties. Thoroughness always characterized his activities and this quality is clearly demonstrated in this context. Many detailed written statements were presented by him on such topics as courses of study, library resources, teaching personnel, instructional space, public lectures, sources of financial support, and long range plans for developing a full university curriculum. As noted above in Edgren's inaugural address, he emphasized the responsibility of the new institution to establish the right to evaluate the student achievement through independent right of examination. This was a recurrent emphasis in his presentation to the Board of

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

Directors.

The course of instruction at *Göteborgs Höghskola* in the early period was devoted exclusively to humanistic studies. The faculty was composed of the following competent scholars and teachers: Hjalmar Edgren, professor of modern European languages, with instruction in Germanic languages and Sanskrit; Axel Kock, professor of Nordic languages; Olof August Danielson, professor in classical languages, who had been professor of Greek at Uppsala University; Karl Johan Warburg, professor of aesthetics, literature, and history of art; Johan Vising, professor of modern European languages, with instruction in romance languages; Ernst Carlson, professor of history and politics; Johannes Paulson, professor of classical languages; and Vitalis Norström, professor of philosophy. Assistants also worked with the professors. In addition to classroom instruction, the professors delivered public lectures which attracted large numbers of citizens who were not enrolled at the institution. The enrollment was modest during the early years. The catalogue records for the autumn term 1891 twenty students and twelve auditors. The number of students in the autumn term 1892 was thirty-four with ten auditors. The data for 1893 showed thirty-six students and nine auditors. Regular attendance at public university lectures was between 600 and 700 during each year. A fine beginning had been made.¹⁰

Hjalmar Edgren's exacting schedule, over and above his responsibilities as *rektor*, can readily be ascertained from the catalogue during his three years of service. In the autumn term, 1891, he presented lectures on Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, on Tuesdays and Fridays, 11–12; on Goethe's *Torquato Tasso*, Tuesdays and Fridays, 12–1; "Principles of the Sanskrit Language," Monday and Thursday, 9–10. A public lecture was given on the poetry of Tennyson in the large lecture hall each Friday evening, 7–8. Moreover, he was available for students on Mondays and Thursdays, 3–4. His *rektor's* office was open from 11–12 on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Hjalmar Edgren's schedule of teaching was similar to the one cited above during all of his years at Göteborg, although the subject matter area varied considerably. His lecture to formal classes included Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Othello*, Goethe's *Faust*, Wordsworth's "Poetry,"

Byron's *Childe Harold*, "Medieval German and *Nibelungenlied*," "Principles of Sanskrit," and seminars on "The Sounds of the German Language" and "Comparative Linguistics."¹¹

Although Hjalmar Edgren was fully occupied with his many academic and administrative responsibilities, he was happy and enthusiastic about developments, although at the same time he showed impatience that progress was not more rapid. In December, 1892, he wrote to Professor Esaias Tegnér at Lund: "Everything is progressing here now in a promising manner. If we receive the right of examination, which according to reports direct from authoritative sources seems quite certain, we will undoubtedly have a good future." However, he expressed concern about the response in certain university circles: "It is strange how slowly the matter is handled at Uppsala. One is tempted to doubt if the era of the telegraph, telephone, and typewriter has come there yet."¹²

Edgren's greatest academic concern was related to the imperative need for *Göteborgs Högskola* to secure recognition for the quality of instruction by the professors without the necessity for examination and approval from outside sources through the use of "censors." On May 27, 1893, in a long statement to the Board of Directors, the issue was forcefully presented by him: "Academic instruction requires unconditionally that the teacher has freedom to conduct himself in such a manner that the instruction depends upon and issues from his scholarly individuality, and that there must be no limitations of that freedom, and, further, that the instructional ability and educational plans of the *högskola* faculty should be fully recognized by the authorities. Permission should thus be granted that the examinations at the *högskola* might be given without supervision of censors from the *Riksuniversitet* (the national university)."¹³ Hjalmar Edgren soon received the great satisfaction of seeing this goal achieved when on June 17, 1893, *examensrätt* (the right of examination) was granted *Göteborgs Högskola*, effective February 1, 1894.

Although Edgren's assignment as *rektor* and professor of languages was an important and time-consuming one, the indefatigable scholar continued to produce several learned articles and a major translation during this period. His attention was naturally turned toward education. In 1891, he published in *Nordisk tid-*

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

skrift an article on the higher schools of learning in Sweden, tracing their origin and development, "Högskolor, deras uppkomst och utbildning." This article was followed by a publication during the next year in the same periodical dealing with education in the United States, "Om samuppfostran i Amerika, några statistiska iakttagelser." This comprehensive article included statistical information together with the author's evaluation of developments. *Svensk tidskrift* published in 1891 his article dealing with the study of modern languages, "De nyare språkens studium vid våra läroverk." His first love, languages, received further attention in the *Nordisk tidskrift*, 1892, in an article in which he analysed various dictionaries and lexicons, and evaluated their scholarly significance, "Språkhistoriska ordböcker, en blick på deras vetenskapliga och rationella betydelse." A significant identification of Edgren's linguistic scholarship is found in the volume on comparative grammatical study, which was published in 1892. This comprehensive work, *Jämförande grammatik, omfattande Sanskrit, Grekiska, Latin, och Gotiska. I. Ljudlära och nominal stambildningslära* (123 pages), is a detailed study involving Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, and Gothic, published by Wettergren and Kerber. The interesting and genius-like character of Edgren's productivity in the midst of demanding academic responsibilities is further demonstrated by the publication in 1892 of a volume of the poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in Swedish translation. This 368-page volume, *Valda dikter af Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, tolkade*, with a biographical study of the poet by Edgren, presented Swedish readers with a comprehensive selection of Longfellow's poems. Wettergren and Kerber was the publisher.

Hjalmar Edgren's activities at Göteborg involved him extensively in the cultural life of the community. He was an active member of the distinguished *Göteborgs Kungliga Vetenskaps- och Vitterhets-Samhälle* (The Royal Scientific and Literary Society in Göteborg), whose members were the outstanding intellectual leaders in these fields. He also served one year as the president of the society. He was elected as an honorary member of *Värmslands Nation* in Uppsala, an honor accorded by the student organization that represented the province in which Hjalmar Edgren was born.

The Years at Göteborg, 1891-1893

The Edgren household was a busy place. Anna and Arthur were attending the Göteborg schools. Verna was born in Göteborg on March 4, 1892, to complete the Edgren family circle. Marianne was happy in their attractive home at Kungsportsavenyen 24, and enjoyed entertaining associates at the *högskola* and friends who came from America, Sweden and the continent. The years in Göteborg had been happier years for Marianne than the years in far-away Lincoln, Nebraska. But the winds of change were beginning to blow again upon the Edgrens.

The record shows conclusively that Hjalmar Edgren was making a splendid contribution as *rektor* and professor when once again a decisive development occurred in his life and that of the family. The minutes of the Board of Directors of *Göteborgs Högskola*, May 30, 1893, describe the situation:

A letter has come from *Rektor* and Professor Hjalmar Edgren in which he states that in order to provide adequate control of his economic affairs he has found it necessary to accept the position of professor offered him at the State University of Nebraska, and that from and with next September, he wishes to be relieved of his position with *Högskolan*. The Board of Directors, through its chairman, expresses its regret in behalf of *Högskolan*, that the institution at such a decisive point as the present should lose such an outstanding scholar and teacher, while at the same time the members express their genuine thankfulness for the unspared zeal which he always showed in the service to *Högskolan*, and herewith grants Professor Edgren's request to be relieved of his position as professor at the end of August."¹⁴

Hjalmar Edgren had enjoyed the years at Göteborg. In October, 1893, after returning to Lincoln, Nebraska, he expressed his feelings in a letter to Professor August Wijkander: "The past two years at Göteborg have been a high point in my life." He expressed the hope that he could return to Sweden in a few years, because he "was not pleased to become an American for the rest of my life."

Edgren was greatly disappointed with the situation upon his return to Nebraska: "Lincoln went up like a balloon when we were here last, but it has been stunted in its growth and seems to

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

be half dead.”¹⁵ Moreover, 1893 was the year of great economic depression in the United States.

One can readily understand the implications for Hjalmar Edgren and his family of moving once again across the Atlantic to the center of the United States. He was reassured in his doubts, however, by the fact that he was returning to a university in which he was admired and wanted. Moreover, his faithfulness and devotion to Nebraska is another example of his capacity to give unfeigned loyalty to his two worlds.

The economic problems cited in the minutes of the Board of Directors of *Göteborgs Höghskola* were fully explained in Edgren's correspondence with friends. In 1894, Edgren recounted to Professor Johan Vising the circumstances that were important in his decision to leave Göteborg the previous year in order to protect his investment in property at Lincoln. He stated that if he had known how badly his investment had been managed, he would not have returned. He was thoroughly “disgusted with the manner in which business is conducted in the West.” Later, in September, 1898, he informed Professor Wijkander that he had lost 25,000 kr. on his investments, a sum that was five times as large as the salary that he received during his first year as a professor at *Göteborgs Höghskola*.¹⁶

VI

The University of Nebraska 1893-1901

In the summer of 1893, Hjalmar and Marianne Edgren and their three children, Anna, twelve, Arthur, nine, and Verna, one, left Göteborg for distant Lincoln, Nebraska. This was Hjalmar's fourth crossing of the Atlantic to share once again in the pattern of American life. There was great surprise and disappointment among many people in Göteborg, but there was rejoicing in Lincoln. Chancellor James H. Canfield in his report to the Board of Regents in June, 1893, described this feeling: "The Board was fortunate to secure as the successor to Professor J. R. Wightman, Professor A. H. Edgren, the *Rektor Magnificus* at the University of Göteborg. Professor Edgren is too favorably known in University circles to need any commendation in this report. His return to the State and to the work of instruction here has been hailed with delight by all who knew him in an earlier day." *The Hesperian*, University of Nebraska student publication, in September, 1893, in expressing appreciation for the course of events observed that, "the happy way in which Professor Edgren conducts his class work will serve to make study in the department of romance languages more a recreation than a labor."¹

Only two years had elapsed since the Edgrens had left Lincoln for Göteborg. The family was soon reestablished at the large and well-furnished home at 1446 Q Street which had been built for their arrival in 1885. Old friends soon shared with the Edgrens

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

in the hospitality and fellowship that was so mutually rewarding. Anna and Arthur enrolled in the public schools and soon made many friends. Verna, who was born in Göteborg, began a life-long association with Lincoln which was interrupted only during the time that her father was a member of the Nobel Institute in Stockholm and during a short period thereafter. The ties with the Old World, although always intimate, were not as direct as formerly in a family sense, since Marianne's mother passed away during the years that the Hjalmar Edgrens lived in Göteborg.

Hjalmar Edgren entered into his professorial position in romance languages and Sanskrit with the same enthusiasm that characterized all of his academic activities. His classes attracted many students. In a detailed report to the chancellor in June, 1894, he set forth the program of instruction which provided French (twelve courses), with great emphasis upon French literature, Italian (two courses), Spanish (two courses), Sanskrit (two courses), comparative Indo-European philology (two courses). The staff in Edgren's department was steadily increased so that he was able to specialize in Sanskrit and linguistics. In June, 1899, he wrote to the chancellor suggesting that his title be changed from Professor of Romance Languages to Professor of Sanskrit and Linguistic Science and Acting Head of the Department of Romance Languages. He stated that this title "would express actual conditions since by force of circumstances, at least two-thirds of my present instruction is in pure philology and Sanskrit." Moreover, he pointed out that it "would indicate, in our *Calendar*, expansion—without imperialism."²

An interesting portrayal of Hjalmar Edgren as a teacher during this period is recorded by the late Dr. Alvin S. Johnson, the distinguished American political scientist, scholar, and author, who was a student at the University of Nebraska, in a letter to Mrs. W. E. Barkley, Hjalmar Edgren's daughter. Alvin Johnson described Hjalmar Edgren as, "the first scholar of world reputation I met in my youth. He was a great philologist and linguist. I was myself on the way of becoming a linguist." Johnson then described the project that Edgren planned for the two of them as he continued: "There was a great dramatic movement in India about 600 A.D. and, nobody, not even Indian scholars of our time, knew

The University of Nebraska, 1893-1901

anything about it. I would soon have Sanskrit enough to work over the manuscripts. We would have to go to India to get at them." However, as Edgren's former student pointed out, "The Nobel Prize position blotted out any such dreams as also our plan of a comprehensive grammar of Greek, Latin, Gothic, and Sanskrit." Edgren and Johnson had a publisher's contract for such a volume. Then Alvin Johnson concluded: "Although I turned away from philology to political science, the passion for true scholarship that animated your father had a lasting influence on me."³

The most distinctive contribution that Hjalmar Edgren made to the University of Nebraska was in graduate studies. As a scholar of distinction he was in a unique role to stimulate such studies by his own example. Robert N. Manley, the historian of the University of Nebraska, has written that, "There was slight public demand for an expansion of the University's graduate program. The impetus for it came from faculty and administrators who realized that the standing of the University in the academic community depended in large measure on its graduate work. Professor Edgren had been directing graduate training, and when he resigned in 1891 to return to Sweden the program slacked off."⁴

When Professor Edgren had established himself again in the University of Nebraska, he began to promote courses and programs of graduate level. In the year prior to his return, there had been twenty-one graduate students. Two years later the number was sixty-eight. Edgren and his associates worked steadily to produce a program and an organizational unit that would embrace this responsibility of the university. At a meeting of the general faculty on December 9, 1895, Professor Edgren presented the report of the graduate committee, which was laid upon the table until the next meeting. The proposal was discussed at subsequent meetings. When the faculty assembled on March 16, 1896, the chancellor announced that "he would recommend to the faculty at its next regular meeting that the graduate department be named the Graduate School and that the head of the school be called a Dean." On March 23, Professor Charles E. Bessey moved that "the recommendation of the chancellor be adopted by the faculty and the proper notice be sent to the regents." This motion was carried.⁵

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

When the regents assembled for their regular meeting on April 16, 1896, the principal item on the agenda was graduate education. Chancellor George C. MacLean explained to the regents that since there had been graduate students at the university for a number of years and provisions had been made for graduate courses in the catalogue, and since the faculty, after extensive study had presented a program leading to graduate degrees, the faculty, at his suggestion, had voted to request the regents to change the name from Graduate Department to Graduate School and that a dean be appointed. The chancellor announced also his pleasure to nominate Professor Edgren as Dean. On April 17, the regents took the following action: "On motion it was ordered, in accordance with the recommendations of the chancellor, that the graduate work at the University be organized under the name of the 'Graduate School' with a Dean at its head. Also that Professor A. H. Edgren be and is hereby appointed as Dean for the ensuing year." The regents also approved the award of a limited number of fellowships and scholarships not to exceed \$300.⁶

Professor Edgren and his associates had planned carefully the great responsibility related to graduate study. The catalogue which announced the program identified seventeen professors as constituting the graduate faculty. Two degrees, master of arts and doctor of philosophy, were offered. The sequence of courses, residence requirements, examinations, and the "scholarly research" required were carefully described. The candidate must present 100 printed copies of the approved thesis for the doctor's degree. Succeeding reports chronicled changes in the program as experience dictated. In 1897, Edgren reported one significant result of the new graduate program: "An impetus toward more thorough scholarship is felt throughout the entire University as a result of having a band of self-denying persons consecrated to patient scholarship going in and out among the student body."⁷

Professor Edgren's report for the Graduate School for the academic year 1897-1898 identified clearly the pattern of development. The enrollment was 141 in 1897-1898 in contrast with 113 the previous year. (Five years earlier, in the academic year 1892-1893, the enrollment had been twenty-one.) University of Nebraska graduates provided ninety-six students while sixty-four

The University of Nebraska, 1893-1901

came from other colleges and universities. Moreover, 111 of the 141 graduate students were candidates for degrees. There were nine Ph.D. candidates, with two expecting to graduate that year, and 102 master's candidates, with forty-five likely candidates. Twenty departments enrolled graduate students. The two largest enrollments were English, fifty, and history, thirty-eight. Fifty students were enrolled in the natural sciences and eleven in mathematics. It was apparent that there was a good response to the graduate program. Edgren, in his report in 1900, identified 148 graduate students of whom 120 were candidates for degrees. The distribution was approximately the same proportion as in the report for 1897-1898. In 1900, students came from forty-five colleges and universities distributed as follows: New England, 4, Middle Atlantic, 3, East Central, 14, West Central 21, and European, 3.⁸

In 1898, Edgren wrote with enthusiasm about the progress in graduate studies. After recounting the emphasis upon high admission standards and high level performance, he states that, "only three state universities and about twelve other institutions have a larger graduate attendance. A permanent growth seems insured: May we only be enabled by adequate support to meet the high and exacting demands of such growth, if our Graduate School shall be more than an ornamental accessory to the collegiate ground structure, and contribute its mite to that advancement of human knowledge which is no less necessary to civilization than the preservation and distribution of knowledge."⁹

Although Professor Edgren was pleased with the interest as evidenced by the large enrollment, as a scholar and educator he emphasized the problems and the responsibility, when he wrote:

That the graduate school is inadequately equipped for the instruction it demands, if it shall fulfill its high purposes not only of imparting the most advanced knowledge in the various fields covered by it, but also of contributing its share toward the development of that knowledge, is patent to all familiar with the exacting requirements of such work. And it is also certain that unless a definite policy of strengthening the graduate school in this line be followed, that school, which now starts with such fair prospects, will be checked or even stunted in

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

its growth. Our most immediate need I hold to be the gradual appointment of teachers whose main or sole work shall be devoted to graduate instruction as well as original research. . . . No sound development of a graduate school can be effected by any system compromising between economy and the requirements of the highest practicable efficiency, to the prejudice of the latter. In the interest of the graduate school, I would therefore urge the desirability of so shaping its development for the immediate future that, by degrees as circumstances allow and make it advisable, the heads of the various departments be appointed, or considered appointed, with reference especially to graduate instruction, reasonably limited in extent, and with the understanding that it be part of their duty also to guide and do original research.¹⁰

In his report for the biennium, 1898-1900, Dean Edgren wrote:

I would reiterate here the recommendation made in my previous report (1898) of gradually, as circumstances allow, appointing teachers for graduate instruction on the principle that such instruction, and the furtherance of scientific investigation, shall be their chief work. Such a policy can but recommend itself to one familiar with the exacting demands of graduate work and appreciative of the importance of promoting the advancement, and not alone the transmission, of knowledge.¹¹

The years at the University of Nebraska again illustrate the productivity of Hjalmar Edgren as a creative writer and scholar. In the midst of the heavy demands of teaching and administrative assignments, a large number of publications came from the press involving a book of poems and scholarly works in Sanskrit, English, Swedish, Norwegian, French, German, and Italian. In 1894, Hjalmar Edgren's second volume of poetry, *Blåklint: Nya dikter och öfversättningar* (133 pages), was published by P. A. Norstedt and Sons, Stockholm. The collection includes twenty-six poems in Swedish and one in English by Edgren and five poems of Tennyson translated into Swedish. The poems have primarily their setting in Sweden except for two that originated with his experiences in Mexico and one, in English, relating to the American scene.

Edgren's continuous interest in Sanskrit and Indian literature resulted in additional publications during this period. Henry Holt, in 1894, published his English translation, from Sanskrit, entitled, *Shakuntala or the Recovered Ring: A Hindoo Drama by Kalidasa*. (A Swedish translation had been produced in 1875.) The pattern of linguistic analysis resulted in the publication *Evolution by Metaphore, as Illustrated by Sanskrit and English* (1896). The *University of Nebraska Studies* published in 1899 his articles, "Topical Digest of the Rig-Veda" and "Spanish Verbs with Vowel Gradation in the Present System."

Edgren, as a professor of languages, made important contributions to the study of languages during this period. The most comprehensive publications were a French-English dictionary and an Italian-English dictionary. *A French and English Dictionary*, with P. Burnett as collaborator (1,252 pages), was published by Henry Holt and Company, in 1901, and reissued in 1926 and 1938. The volume was also published by William Heineman in London in 1902. Edgren, with the assistance of Giuseppe Bico and John L. Brieg, produced *An Italian and English Dictionary* (1,028 pages) which was also published by Henry Holt in 1901. It has been reissued several times, the latest in 1956. This dictionary was published in London in 1902. Edgren was the author of grammars in French, Spanish, Italian, and German, involving D. C. Heath and the American Book Company, several of the grammars having appeared in revised editions. Edgren also edited several French readers as classroom textbooks based on the writings of Taine, Thiers, and Jules Verne.¹²

Hjalmar Edgren enjoyed new lands and peoples, especially the pleasure he received from the summers he spent in Mexico in 1889 and 1896. Following the second visit he authored an interesting account of the historical, cultural and natural developments of the country in a volume entitled, *Sommarferier i Montezumas land* (181 pp.) published in Stockholm in 1898 by P. Palmquist. Among other miscellaneous contributions during this period was an article on American graduate schools in the *Educational Record* in 1898; an account of his experiences in the Civil War, appearing in the Swedish American literary annual *Prärieblomman* in 1900; and a translation of Ibsen's poem, "On the Highlands," in 1901.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

One August day in 1895, John Enander, then editor of *Svenska journalen* in Omaha, and a distinguished name among Swedish Americans, called on Hjalmar Edgren. When he approached the beautiful home, he noticed the birches and pines, living symbols of the owner's homeland. He was soon greeted by the professor who used beautiful Swedish with a touch of a Värmland accent. When Enander entered Hjalmar Edgren's study, he realized that he was in the presence of a great scholar. His host was in the midst of research on a project in Italian as evidenced by copies of Dante and Petrarch on the scholar's desk. Soon the visitor noticed the masterpieces of Greek and Roman literature, Sanskrit, and numerous volumes of Swedish classics.

Although John Enander was interested in Professor Edgren's large and selective library, he was more interested in the man who worked in that study as described in these words:

Everything witnessed to the fact that this was the home of great learning. The well-worn bindings on many books spoke a language that no one could misunderstand. What made the deepest and most realistic impression on the visitor was however, this learned man's modest personality. . . . This man was no expansive egotist who boasted about his ability and great achievements, nor did he brag in an ultra-American manner about the great things to come. No, here was the humble scholar, who in modesty concealed his greatness in that he pointed out what others had done in his area of scholarly research.

Enander, in reflecting upon the great scholarly qualities of Professor Edgren, continued regretfully: "It is sad that among our countrymen in America we have only one concerning whom the above description can be made and possibly we will lose this one through his return to Europe sooner or later. When will the time come in this country when original scholarly effort will be appreciated and rewarded in accordance with its merits?" Enander said goodbye to Edgren and as he went away he reflected: "This visit will not soon be forgotten by me." ¹³

Although Hjalmar Edgren was greatly occupied with his many responsibilities at the university, he carried on considerable correspondence with friends in Sweden. This correspondence re-

The University of Nebraska, 1893-1901

flects his enthusiastic response to life in Lincoln while at the same time it indicates a longing to return to Sweden. In an undated letter in 1894, to Professor Vising at Göteborg, Edgren wrote:

We all feel well now, although my wife was quite ill for some weeks with scarlet fever and influenza. She is now fully restored in health and is up and around again. I have much to do at the University and I am working at home on a couple of textbooks, in order to earn some extra income and recoup my losses. I naturally try to do some scholarly research also. What makes the load lighter here is that we are not required to give public lectures. I have a class in Lamartine, two in Victor Hugo, one in Spanish, and a basic course in Sanskrit. You see that my hands are full. We have 1,200 students, which is quite good for an institution in the West, which in a few weeks will celebrate a quarter century of its existence.¹⁴

Dean Edgren was torn between the satisfaction which he found with his assignment at the University of Nebraska and the rather persistent uncertainty as to where he should spend the rest of his life. In a letter in February, 1894, he described his predicament, indicating however, that he had the "greatest willingness to return to Sweden if an opportunity to do so would develop." His desire, he pointed out was closely related to the feelings of his wife who had "such tearful homesickness." In April, Edgren discussed his situation again with Professor Vising writing: "If no position develops in Sweden, I hope, if my health remains good, that I can build a bridge for a return through the income from my good salary and through literary work, at least before the time that our children strike their roots so deep here that they cannot be transplanted again." On July 2, 1897, he wrote to Vising that his wife and two daughters were visiting in Sweden during the summer. He was not able to join them because of his work with the University Extension. In the midst of the terrific heat, which averaged 104° Fahrenheit, he reflected on the pleasant summer climate and delightful Marstrand where many Swedes spent summer vacations.¹⁵

A new opportunity loomed on the horizon for Professor Edgren when in 1898 it was announced that a new professorship in

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

comparative languages would be established at *Göteborgs Högskola*. In response to inquiries from friends in Sweden as to his availability for the position, he replied enthusiastically in the affirmative. It soon appeared that there would be opposition, primarily within the membership of the Board of Directors of *Göteborgs Högskola*. Edgren's action in leaving the institution in 1893, while serving as the first *rektor* for only two years, was not pleasing to some members who felt that his tenure was too brief. It is clear that the faculty of *Göteborgs Högskola* and scholars in the field of comparative languages, including Professor Esaias Tegnér, heartily endorsed his appointment.

Edgren realized the implications of the hostile feeling within the Board of Directors. In a letter to Professor Wijkander in September, 1898, he stated, "I have not so completely attached myself to the possibility of returning to Sweden so that I would be heart-broken if the call did not come. On the other hand, I am quite prepared for that result." When he wrote to Professor Tegnér in October, 1898, he stated that he would understand if the position were not awarded to him but "the only thing that would grieve me is that after a not entirely unproductive career, I should receive the mark *improbatur* at home." The appointment was delayed and in August, 1899, Edgren wrote to Dr. Johan Vising, *rektor* of *Göteborgs Högskola*: "Thank you for your kind letter! I have for professional reasons hesitated to write to you about the vacant professorship, especially since you became *rektor*. Your letter gives me occasion meanwhile to write a few words. My improved condition (financial) has not in the least changed my desire to return to Sweden, especially because of the circumstance that our children are establishing themselves here more and more, and possibly they would oppose returning to Sweden at a later time." Edgren shared his great joy that the faculty of the Göteborg institution were supporting him. He hoped that his record of scholarship and publication would be recognized by the Board of Directors, and that opposition from this source would be overcome.¹⁶

When the appointment was made, Edgren's concern proved to be correct. He was passed over for Dr. B. P. E. Lidén for the Göteborg professorship. In January, 1900, Hjalmar Edgren wrote

The University of Nebraska, 1893-1901

the following letter to Lidén: "Permit me, although we are not personally acquainted, to send you my good wishes upon your appointment to the position for which we contested. It is with sincere respect for your scholarly achievements—and of course without any bitterness toward you personally—that I wish you great success in the very important assignment in Swedish cultural development that you now enter."¹⁷ Hjalmar Edgren had earnestly desired the opportunity to return to Göteborg. He was keenly disappointed, but he was always a scholar and a gentleman.

The year 1900 provided a strange mixture of great disappointment and great joy for Hjalmar Edgren. In October, he received a letter from Professor Esaias Tegnér, his old friend at Lund, a member of the Swedish Academy, and now a member of a committee of five members of the academy who were charged with the responsibility of working out the details for awarding the Nobel Prize in Literature, indicating that he was under serious consideration for appointment in connection with plans for awarding the prize. Edgren's joyous response is apparent in his letter to Tegnér on October 10: "The news about a likely call to the Nobel Institute came like a glimpse of sunshine and you have my sincere thanks for what you did and for what you are doing in this matter."¹⁸ The formal call to be identified with the Nobel Institute and the Swedish Academy came shortly thereafter.

In February, 1901, Professor Edgren wrote a brief but sincere letter of resignation to the chancellor and Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska:

Having accepted a position in the Nobel Institute of Stockholm, Sweden, I hereby respectfully ask to be relieved of my duties in the University of Nebraska from July 1, this year. In thus tendering my resignation, I cannot forego to express my deep appreciation for the kindly and generous spirit in which I have been met by all during my long service here, and which will hold me ever attached to the University of Nebraska.¹⁹

Colleagues and students received the news of his resignation with regret and sorrow although there was full recognition of the important post with the Nobel Institute which caused him to leave

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

the university.

The high esteem in which Hjalmar Edgren was held is shown by the motion which the Board of Regents adopted at their April meeting in 1901:

In accepting the resignation of Dean A. H. Edgren, the Board of Regents testify their regret at the severance of their relations with a gentleman who has been so valuable to the University and to the State. They recognize his faithful service as a teacher and his great influence upon the life of the University, especially his aid in organizing and building up the Graduate School. His presence and his counsels will be greatly missed in efforts to sustain and promote the University. The Board of Regents desire to express their regret at the termination of Mr. Edgren's citizenship in his adopted country which he has understood so thoroughly and interpreted so wisely to his home people and which he served so well in his young manhood as an officer during the Civil War. The board extends to him, in behalf of their own body and of the University their heartiest wishes for his success and welfare in the position of high responsibility to which he has been called.²⁰

VII

The Nobel Institute 1901-1903

In the spring of 1901, the Edgrens made final plans to return to Sweden, this time for permanent residence. The decision involved considerable tension within the family. The father had shared with friends in Sweden the fact that the children were becoming well-established in American life. This was especially true of Arthur. He was actively involved in the student life of the University of Nebraska and had many friends in the Lincoln community. The prospect of adaptation to life in Sweden did not present serious problems for Anna and Verna. Since Arthur was seventeen years old, it seemed reasonable that he should have his wish fulfilled that he stay in Lincoln and complete his degree requirements in engineering at the University of Nebraska. In May, 1901, the rest of the family left Lincoln for Sweden and their future home at Djursholm in the Stockholm area.

The journey to Sweden was interrupted by a pleasant and festive occasion in Chicago as Swedish Americans and other friends paid tribute to the recent distinction that had come to Hjalmar Edgren with his appointment to an important post under the jurisdiction of the Swedish Academy. On the evening of Tuesday, May 18, a group of Swedes and Americans assembled for a testimonial dinner at the Union League Club to honor Hjalmar Edgren. The banquet hall was decorated with the Swedish and American flags. Hjalmar Edgren sat between the Royal Swedish

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

Consul at Chicago, J. R. Lindgren, who was master of ceremonies, and Dr. William Rainey Harper, president of the University of Chicago, an old friend and roommate from student days at Yale. Harper, J. A. Enander, the Swedish American journalist and orator, Jakob Bonggren, the poet, and Professor C. W. Foss of Augustana College, vied with one another in paying tribute to Hjalmar Edgren.¹

In the background of "tremendous applause from the guests," Edgren responded briefly but effectively to the tributes according to the report in *Svenska Amerikanaren*:

He did not feel that he deserved the great honor that had been extended to him. He had only done his duty in the place where life had brought him, and there were tens of thousands of his countrymen in America in other walks of life, who had done likewise and were just as deserving of recognition and praise as he. In all his endeavors, the thread that ran through them was faithfulness to his adopted country, a faithfulness which meanwhile did not hinder him from having a burning, heartfelt love for Mother Svea.²

The pride of Swedish Americans in Hjalmar Edgren's appointment to the Nobel Institute is recorded in *Svenska Amerikanaren*:

When Professor Edgren of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, was called to become a member of the Nobel Institute there was great joy among the Swedes of America that our incomparable linguist and great poet had gained the recognition that he merits. . . . The scholarly Swedish American circle is small, and it cannot really afford such a loss. The most learned Swedish American bids us farewell. However, we Swedish Americans rejoice that he has been appreciated for his achievements in our old homeland and Dr. Edgren is followed by the warmest good wishes from the western hemisphere. He will not be forgotten here, and every new success that comes to him there will give us pleasure.³

Important background factors had provided the basis for the good news that caused the move to Sweden. The point of departure was the reading at Stockholm of the last will and testament of

Alfred Nobel, the great Swedish inventor, organizer, and benefactor who died on December 10, 1896. This famous document provided for awarding substantial prizes and attendant international honors in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, peace and literature. Alfred Nobel's second will of November, 1895, provided that an annual award be given to "the person who shall have produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work of an idealistic tendency," to be awarded by the Swedish Academy, composed of eighteen members, created by King Gustavus III in 1786 on the model of the French Academy.⁴

The Swedish Academy received information about its new responsibility within a month after Alfred Nobel's death. There was considerable opposition to accepting the assignment from Hans Forssell, historian and politician, and from Carl Gustaf Malmström, historian, members of the Academy, and from other individuals, but the firm and capable leadership within the Academy of Carl David af Wirsén, poet and literary critic, was decisive in the action which the Academy took to award the prize in literature. The Nobel Foundation provided for the creation of a Nobel Institute in each of the fields for awarding a prize. On March 8, 1900, the report of the Academy Committee for awarding the prize in literature was accepted by the Academy and on June 29, 1900, the arrangements were confirmed by the King of Sweden and the Swedish Government. It was further provided that "under the term 'literature' shall be comprised, not only belles-lettres, but also other writings which, by virtue of their form and method of presentation, possess literary value."⁵

The next action of the Swedish Academy was to establish on October 11, 1900, a Nobel Committee which was charged with the responsibility of working out the details relating to awarding the prize and making recommendations to the Academy. The committee was composed of Carl David af Wirsén, Esaias Tegnér, Carl Snoilsky, Carl Theodore Odhner, and Carl Rupert Nyblom. Article 2 of the arrangements for awarding the prize in literature stated the following:

At its Nobel Institute, with which shall be associated a considerable library containing modern literature, the Academy shall ap-

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

point a librarian and one or more assistants and, if necessary, officials and assistants with literary training, some permanent and some temporary, who shall prepare matters referring to prizes, give reports on recently published literary works abroad and arrange for the necessary translation of foreign publications.

The Nobel Committee of the Swedish Academy appointed in October, 1900, six distinguished scholars to assist in recommending authors for the prize in literature. This action was appropriate as Anders Österling, a member of the Academy, has pointed out in an important article: "Thanks to his sound literary education, Carl David af Wirsén himself undoubtedly had decided qualifications as a prize-judge but otherwise at that time extremely few Academy members could be regarded as literary experts. . . . With the exception of Wirsén, there was only a single poet, namely Carl Snoilsky."⁶

The six members appointed on October 4, 1900, to serve the Swedish Academy through the Nobel Institute were distinguished scholars who represented a wide field of literary endeavors. They were: Alfred Jensen, Slavic literature; Professor V. E. L. Lidforss, Romance literature, especially Spanish; Professor C. R. Nyblom, without special assignment; Docent K. Hildebrand, recent historical literature; Dr. Göran Björkman, Romance literature, especially Portuguese; and Professor Hjalmar Edgren, German, English, and American literature.⁷

The appointment of Hjalmar Edgren to this important position as a member of a group of distinguished scholars and literary persons was indeed a great tribute to him. It is also an interesting commentary on both Edgren's reputation and the attitude of the Swedish Academy that a call should be sent to a professor from faraway University of Nebraska to serve the Academy as its expert adviser on German, English, and American literature. Hjalmar Edgren was well-known for his high-level scholarship and for his two volumes of poetry. Moreover, he would bring a wide range of scholarly and literary experience to the deliberations of the committee and Academy. The high esteem in which he was held by Professor Esaias Tegnér, a member of the Swedish Academy and of the Nobel Committee, was undoubtedly a vital personal factor

in Hjalmar Edgren's appointment.

Hjalmar Edgren was intently occupied in his work for the Nobel Committee. Since the award was to be made for the first time in 1901, special efforts were required to meet the demands. A Nobel library had been established in the autumn of 1900 at Barnhusgatan 18, Stockholm, where Professor Karl Warburg, well-known literary critic and a colleague of Edgren's at *Göteborgs Högskola*, was the librarian. Anders Österling has provided valuable information on the award of the Nobel Prize in literature. Since Hjalmar Edgren's responsibility was for German, English, and American literature, it is interesting to notice the distribution of nominees and proposers. In 1901, there were twenty-five nominees and seventy-eight proposers. There were three nominees and fourteen proposers for German literature but none for English and American literature. In 1902, the number of nominees was thirty-four with 121 proposers. Six nominees and twenty-two proposers were presented for German literature, eight nominees and sixty proposers for English literature, and none for American literature. In 1903, the last year of Hjalmar Edgren's service prior to his sudden death from a heart attack, there were twenty-four nominees with 145 proposers. The nominees for German literature were two with twenty-one proposers and five nominees with forty-four proposers for English literature. There were no nominees for American literature.⁸

No evidence is available of the specific materials and comments that Hjalmar Edgren presented to the Nobel Committee of the Swedish Academy. This is largely explained by the Academy's policy that precludes the announcement of the nominees for the prize in literature. The number of nominees and proposers in German and English literature indicates that Hjalmar Edgren was fully occupied in the assignment for which he was so well qualified and in which he found such great enjoyment. Although no prize was awarded to German, English or American authors during Hjalmar Edgren's period of service with the Nobel committee, the faithfulness, talent, and effort which characterized his entire life were engaged also in this important assignment.

Hjalmar Edgren's position with the Nobel Institute involved sustained reading and study, but he still found time to continue

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

his writing, translation, and research. In 1902, P. A. Norstedt and Sons published *Alfred Tennyson: Dikter i urval* (229 pages), which consisted of a translation of selected poems of Tennyson with an introduction. He was awarded the Letterstedt Prize by the Swedish Royal Academy of Science for this achievement in 1903, the year in which he was also made a Knight of the Swedish Royal Order of the North Star.⁹ Literary publications by Hjalmar Edgren during this period included an article on Longfellow in the *American Quarterly*, 1903, and one on Swinburne, in *Nordisk tidskrift*, 1904. *Brustna Återljud: Dikter* (150 pages), a book of poems written by Edgren, with an introduction by Karl Warburg, was published posthumously by Bonniers in 1904.

When Hjalmar Edgren and his family moved into their large and well-furnished home, *Villa Ektomte*, in the beautifully wooded Djursholm in June, 1901, it seemed as if this scholar, poet, and educator had come to a point in life where his restless, eager spirit would find repose in work that would be pleasant and rewarding. Hjalmar Edgren was in his early sixties, and although he had lived a strenuous life, he possessed a rugged physique and apparent good health. Only during his student years at Yale when he was overcome with nervous exhaustion from overwork and in the Civil War era, when as a Union officer he was stricken with a serious illness, had Hjalmar been ill. Although the work at the Nobel Institute was strenuous and exacting, it seemed to offer a pleasant change from the many demands upon him as dean of the Graduate School of the University of Nebraska.

Hjalmar Edgren was not one whose spirit required the consolation that comes to some people through sharing widely his personal problems. However, a fine relationship existed across the years between Hjalmar and Alexis, his brother, who had a distinguished career as a theologian, preacher, professor, and founder of the Swedish Baptist Theological Seminary that is known today as Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. Hjalmar shared with Alexis his concern that his energy and capacity for work was not at the level he sought, and that at times he felt ill. In December, 1902, approximately a year before Hjalmar's untimely death from a heart attack, Alexis wrote to Hjalmar as follows:

Your last letter brings with it and awakens within me a rather

sad feeling. . . . I should not wonder if the dizzy spells you experience are from the hard strain on your brain. I think, as I have said before, that it would be well for you, perhaps it is absolutely necessary, to give up the strenuous and serious literary activity. Hereafter, do only a *little* of it, be outside considerably, and perhaps you will get over the serious symptoms. It would be delightful if you could come to America again. ¹⁰

Hjalmar Edgren continued his work unabatedly. He used, however, every opportunity to relax, and on pleasant days, he walked in the woods with his daughters Anna and Verna, joining them in picking flowers, watching for birds, and sharing in their youthful joys. He rejoiced over the pleasure that came for the daughters in their friendship with the Segerström girls, Harriot, Greta, Lisa and Esther, who were neighbors, and with Walborg, Ingrid, and Rosa Eberstein who lived across the road from *Villa Ektomte* in a large, castle-like white house. When a building was under construction in the neighborhood, Hjalmar went there almost daily to visit with the workers and to watch the progress of excavation and construction. These men, in their own way, saw something unusual in Hjalmar Edgren, "the kindly professor," who greeted them cordially and shared with them a common humanity. ¹¹

When the gray, cold days of November, 1903, came to Djurs-holm there was great anxiety in the Edgren family circle. Anna Mathilda, age twenty-two, was stricken with tuberculosis. Physicians were consulted, but reluctantly Hjalmar and Marianne Edgren were told that Anna had an illness that medical science would not conquer. This was a blow that carried with it the desperation of the inevitable. Father and mother grieved as devout and loving parents grieve when the sun is about to set upon the life of a dear child.

In the late afternoon of December 9, 1903, Hjalmar Edgren went for a walk in the woods adjoining his home. When he returned he greeted the family, and went to visit Anna, whose condition was becoming increasingly critical. When called to dinner, he sat at his usual place, but only briefly. A heart attack came with all of its dire implications. The physician, who was in Anna's room, came

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

to attend him, but he soon realized that the end was near. "On being told that he could live but an hour or two, he bade farewell to those about him, asked them to give his love to his absent son and brother, and then turning to his wife, he asked her to be sure to send his many friends in America a last farewell. His deepest regret seemed to be that he could not help his faithful wife to bear the approaching loss of their daughter. 'If I could only die for her!' was the burden of his last hour on earth. As he lived, so he died, thinking not of himself, but of others." Death came to Hjalmar Edgren at 8 P.M. that evening and to his daughter three days later. ¹²

Friends came to the Edgren home to share with Marianne and eleven-year old Verna the heartfelt sorrow that had come to them. Arthur, in Lincoln, Nebraska, soon learned of his father's death. At the funeral service for father and daughter in Hedvig Eleanor Church, Stockholm, on December 16, Professor Nathan Söderblom of Uppsala, later the world famous archbishop of the Church of Sweden, preached the sermon, using as his text Philippians 3:15. Many messages of consolation were received from friends in Sweden and America. Carl Gustaf af Wirsén, in behalf of the Swedish Academy, sent the following telegram: "I express to you respectfully my deepest expression of heartfelt feeling on the occasion of your husband's passing out of time. The loss of this outstanding scholar and literary person is very painful for the Swedish Academy. As a poet and translator he leaves an enduring memory." Included among well-known persons at the funeral service were Supreme Court Judge Berg, Professor Esaias Tegnér, Professor Karl Warburg, and Professor Leffler. Floral tributes were abundant from individuals and organizations in Sweden and America. Perhaps the one which Hjalmar Edgren might have appreciated most was a large one from the workers on the building project near his home, their tribute to "the kindly professor." ¹³

In Lincoln, friends and colleagues assembled in large numbers for a memorial service at the chapel of the University of Nebraska on Sunday afternoon, February 14. Hjalmar Edgren's former colleagues at the University, Chancellor E. Benjamin Andrews, Professors L. A. Sherman, Charles E. Bessey, Charles E. Gere, Laurence A. Fossler, and Grove E. Barber presented tributes to his

memory. The graduate faculty presented a long resolution in which they stated:

Learning has lost a profound, broad and ripe scholar of world-fame; our nation, the land of his adoption, has lost a loyal citizen and a brave defender; the University of Nebraska, appreciating his able and efficient service of fourteen years, cherishes his memory as that of a firm friend and a staunch advocate, and we, who knew him best, shall greatly miss a gentle, true, and large-hearted friend.

On December 12, shortly after the news of Professor Edgren's death had reached Lincoln, the *Daily Nebraskan*, student newspaper published on the front page his photograph identifying him as one who "was formerly a beloved member of our faculty and whose memory we will ever cherish with reverent affection and esteem."¹⁴

The earthly remains of Hjalmar Edgren and Anna were placed in the native soil of Värmland in the cemetery of the *Land-kyrka* at Arvika, not far from the Norwegian border. That quiet spot is near Agneteberg where Hjalmar as a boy had spent happy years. His grave lies in the shadows of the old stone church on a tree-covered peninsula with a quiet lake surrounding all but one side of the church yard. The marker on the grave is simple, chronicling the facts of birth and death. At the top is a laurel wreath, a symbol of Hjalmar Edgren's continuous and unfinished pursuit of learning. At the bottom of the marker is the well-known Latin inscription "*Per aspera ad astra*," the motto of Phi Beta Kappa, the distinguished society for recognition of scholarship, in which Hjalmar held membership through the chapter at Cornell University. In the center are the plain letters that spell the good name of Hjalmar Edgren.

VIII

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

Language is the medium for the expression of thought and feeling and the intensity and depth of that thought and feeling is magnified through the poetic form. Moreover, each language has its special nuances and accents that have their source in the life and culture of the people so that much is lost in translation. It is hoped, however, that something of the thought and feeling of Hjalmar Edgren's poetry may be conveyed in the attempt to share its meaning. This is done in full realization of the fact that the original far transcends the effort of the translator to mediate the poet's intent.

Hjalmar Edgren published three volumes of poetry and several other poems appeared in journals and periodicals. Almost all of the poems were in the Swedish language. *Dikter* appeared in 1884, *Blåklint: Ny diktsamling* in 1894, and *Brustna Återljud: Dikter*, posthumously in 1904. Hjalmar Edgren had translated into Swedish, poems of Tennyson, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Bryant, Holmes and others, and those of Viktor Rydberg from Swedish to English, and Ibsen's poems from Norwegian to English. Hjalmar Edgren possessed poetic talent of high merit.

Although a poet writes from experiences, reflections and feelings that are uniquely his own, it is not uncommon to discover the influence of other bards upon an individual poet. Bo Bergman, in his review of *Brustna Återljud* in *Ord och bild* in 1905 traces the

influence of two poets in the works of Edgren: "The influence exerted by the poet mentioned above (Carl Snoilsky) is plain and in the same manner can something in the meditation poems be traced to Viktor Rydberg. Furthermore, Edgren's whole perception of life is closely related to Rydberg; both are highly enlightened personalities and both have found their anchor in a personal tender mysticism, which borrowed the words and formalities of the Christian faith and still had its base on much that was outside this faith." Bo Bergman then concludes: "Both as a thinker and poet Edgren was, of course, the least important, but in his moments he is still a poet—even though his poetry not all too often uses his own flight vehicle, and then what he uses belongs to 'the old school.'"¹

Another response to the poetry of Hjalmar Edgren in his later poems is given by Hans Emil Larsson in *Nordisk tidskrift* in 1905:

One meets here a vigorous spirit who has both an understanding of and a joy in external nature's beauty and at the same time listens to the inner voice of the soul, a well-educated, reflective personality who is not fettered by any religious, scientific, or political dogmas, but who always has a feeling for and thought about the meaning of life and its purpose as his central objective.²

Although the poetry of Hjalmar Edgren embraced a wide variety of subjects, his poems identified clearly certain fields of interest. His principal source was nature, either in the specific pictorial description of mountains, valleys, seas, flowers, and trees, or the new vitality of spring or the pensive melancholy of autumn. Nature was also used as a symbol of life, whether it be of youth and vibrancy, or the lengthening shadows that accompany the passing of the years. Bo Bergman in referring to Edgren's "little nature sketches" writes:

They all show the same healthy happiness over the beauty of the world, and if the eye that perceives them does not possess a striking or original power of observation, it has at least warmth and honesty in its glance. They perhaps are most beautiful when they are seen as visions in a foreign land and colored by a longing for home. Then Värmland looms up for the poet. He hears the rustle in the fir trees so clearly that he must describe it in a poem.³

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

The use of nature as a symbolic form appears frequently in Hjalmar Edgren's poetry. In the poem *Stjärnan* (The Star) he draws a parallel between the life history of a star and the fate of a poem: "The small clear star, a pearl in the blue" makes a distant pilgrimage:

How gently moves your light
Out of a distant place,
How vibrantly it makes a way so bright
Amidst the depths of space!

The light of the star comes from a distant hidden place, and the course of the journey is long, because "The shadows of the earth, do not reach up, far up to you." Many years pass before the light comes down with its message to "the night encompassed world." When the light finally reaches earth it is likely that something has happened in the distant locus of its origin:

Perhaps the source of its birth,
From whence it came to earth,
Has gone out long, long ago
Like the dying poet's song.

There is a parallel here, a hopeful longing that although the poet may be dead, his song will be heard:

Perhaps, too, the song will reach down,
To distant ages far away,
Although the song no longer sounds,
On the poets lips today.

As the poet senses the parallel between the light of a star and the message of a poem, he concludes:

Oh, clear, heavenly star,
You poet out of the blue,

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

How gladly, Oh, how gladly,
I listen to you anew.

One day the poet, as portrayed in *Vattenliljan* (The Water Lily), was slowly floating in his boat down a quiet stream when suddenly he saw “a snow white lily lying in a sunlit wave.” Mistakenly, the observer broke off the lilly, took it home, and placed it in a costly vase, “to shine forth among the simple roses.” But this child of nature suffered great agony. No longer did she see her image mirrored in the clear waves, nor did she have the joyous company of other lilies in their glad array:

No longer danced the waves around
The pure white lily’s glorious crown,
No longer did cool depths afford
Her nourishment and support.

The lily’s captive fate in the costly vase was an unhappy destiny:

No longer drank she light out of the sun’s well
Amidst the mild wind’s murmur,
Nor did the afternoon’s deep glow
Make her cheeks red once more.

The lily reflects about this abrupt change in fate. No steady growth occurs as formerly amidst the gentle movement of the waves. In the midst of the gold and purple and treasure, color and beauty disappear. Life away from nature ends in desperation and death.

That nature has a special mood at the end of summer and the beginning of autumn is portrayed in *Höstmorgon* (Autumn Morning).

In the morning hour’s clean air,
How light and beautiful is the meadow fair,
Half dressed in autumn’s splendor clear,
The other half in summer’s freshness dear.

Moreover, “On the deep blue space there is not a cloud” as “the

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

sun scintillates full and clear.” Bright sprouts of gold are infused amidst the oak and maple, pine and juniper. There is a deep calm that matches the brooding spirit until an unseen power produces a pleasant change:

The bay's surface, as blue and clear
As the mirrored heavens, is rippled lightly
By the welcome wind, which dances sprightly
With life and joy on the billowing waves.

The gentle wind has its own caress as,

The dancing waves play joyfully,
And lap playfully against the stony edge.

But the wind is not disruptive nor does it invade the charming creation of the rays of the sun which reflect “a glittering kaleidoscope against the bottom's red sand and gravel.”

In the midst of the quiet and peace of nature's mood,

There is the sound of a distant bell,
Solemnly singing and dying.

This is a holy day. The church bell is calling people to worship in the nearby parish church. This is the choice of those who hearken to its call. But another alternative is also available, and this one the poet chooses:

But I will worship God here
In the light of the sun, with the wind's caress,
And rejoice in the splendor of nature,
In its color and form, in its peace and joy.

The poetry of Hjalmar Edgren portrays his struggle with the big problems that challenge a thinking man. In *Tviflarn* (The Doubter) an interesting insight is given to questions that confronted him. He describes his situation in the opening lines:

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

In doubt's deep darkness I have thronged,
I thought and thought, and searched and sought:
Is there a God? — Thus does my mind but question,
Until the thought grows firm within.

The poet is concerned with the contradictions that prevail in life as he asks:

Is there a God with power of love?
Does he consent
That wrong triumphs over right,
And crime by victory is rewarded?

The question is raised as he thinks of poor children living in hovels without enough to eat, hosts slain by the terrible arrogance of tyrants, martyrs executed for their faith, and innocent people killed by the streams of hot lava from Etna's peak. Moreover, the poet is concerned about the image of God:

Is not the picture of God I have,
A reflection—nothing more,
A copy only,
Of what I think he ought to be?
Is it all an illusion,
And the thought but a vibration,
As the blood surges warm,
Through the brain's gray cells?

The poet still seeks an answer as he contemplates the pattern of life:

Yes, search on—with earnestness,
For thus has thought sprung wings,
Of greater worth is honest doubt,
Than thoughtless faith or blind denial.
Search on that with the power of thought
You may attain the seeker's highest dream,
And see eternity's miracle
In clear view here below.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

The poet continues his search for meaning. He cannot see clearly, but he does not believe that life is the result of chance, nor of a wind that accidentally blew the dust together to form man. There is a miracle somewhere, and although its full nature has not been revealed, it should be sought in faith as he concludes with a parallel question:

Does not the flower understand the sun,
Which warms it out of the blue,
As it turns its chalice with longing,
Towards the source of her light anew?

As a thinking, sensitive person, Hjalmar Edgren knew that there were many difficult questions but no easy answers. He found no solution in simple or traditional dogmas. Life was accompanied with death, but in a symbolic form he suggests the triumph of life, although this triumph cannot be explained. In *Ho är den som kan förklara* (Who Can Explain It?), he writes:

Solemn through the ages walks
a shadow deeply veiled;
from life's hand it wrests the torch
and ruins powers everywhere.
"Obliterator," you call him,
"Mediator," my answer is,
"between life and life again."
But who is he, who can explain?

Life has possibilities beyond the immediate "if thought takes wings" and vision brightens the drabness of the present. In *Marmorblocket* (Block of Marble), while using a familiar theme, the poet portrays the artist standing before a rough block of marble, and as he views it he feels:

In the stone's captivity,
An angel can be freed.

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

The sculptor then steps forth, working night and day to free the vision from the hard marble. After great effort and agony:

Then there steps forth from formless stone,
A form complete, so pure,
So nobly tender and proud withal
Like the ideal in the soul.

The artist's vision has been rewarded as the form that was captive is released. But there is a universal element present too, as he concludes, "Thus every object doth conceal a beautiful form," which can come to life through the creative power of love.

Hjalmar Edgren's poetry is generally characterized by a romantic mood that is eminently optimistic, but he also shares a feeling of melancholy. In *Aftonringning* (Evening Bells) there is an interesting blending of joyous sentiment and poignant sorrow. The poet begins with happy remembrances:

Ring out, Oh joyous evening bells, ring out
Invite a holy quiet all around,
Let the bronze tone sound in valley and mound,
And vibrate in the quiet evening's sound.

The remembrances are deepened with feeling as he listens to the bell from the old parish church ringing in the Angelus:

Ring out, Oh joyous evening bells, ring out,
Invite the Sabbath rest all around,
Send far and wide the metal's pure sound,
Around the village as a call from heaven.

The mood changes, however, as he reflects on the passing of the years. These remembrances bring a feeling of melancholy:

How many golden dreams now gone
Are recalled for me anew?
How many friends, who coldly sleep,
Under the quiet churchyard soil?

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

The dreams have been lost in the passing of the years and good friends are no longer present to share in the vibrancy of life. Change has brought a yearning for that which will not return:

Ring out, Oh joyous church bells, ring out,
Invite a holy quiet all around,
Let the bronze's clear harmony die
Over the quiet, purple sea.

The joyous message of the church bells receives no response in the absence of those who once could hear the message.

Hjalmar Edgren turns to the theme of eternity in *På kyrkogården* (At the Churchyard) as he walks among the silent graves. He is mindful about the "words that proclaim eternity," but amidst those voices, there is another:

However—is there down here a breast,
That has not heard the voice of doubt?
For the grave is dedicated to silence,
And death is eternally quiet.

In the absence of certainty, the questions flood in upon him,

Is this our life the only one, the last?
A bubble born to break again?
Oh, just a word, Oh, just a sign,
From one of you, now gone from us!

The poet reflects on the various resources of life:

How weak is all our philosophy,
In contrast with the harmony,
Which so richly comes to meet us,
Out of nature's bounty around us.

But there is another answer to doubt and disillusionment:

And thus my soul receives a prompting:

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

Up, dedicate your weak strength
To higher purposes, beckoning from afar,
To eternity's goal—toward God!
Since it is He, whose spirit's power
Gives light to stars and beauty's flower
And guides the world along the paths
Towards higher goals, than men surmise.

Hjalmar Edgren was an unusual immigrant in that he lived intermittently in the two worlds of Sweden and the United States. In the poem, *En natt på Atlanten* (A Night on the Atlantic) he shares the feeling of loneliness as the emigrant is confronted by the vast expanse of ocean, but he finds meaningful resources in contemplating nature:

The purple sun shining forth from the western rim,
Fades out slowly on sky and wave,
And over the desolate watery scene,
Night has stretched its dark, quiet wings.

But the darkness is not total, because as the gazer searches the heavens,

There is a lighted arch, full of wonder;
And myriads of lighted stars,
Go in quiet majesty in yonder spheres
And measure happily eternity's hours.

The world of nature and of man blend in the quietness of the night,

And the ship's dark masts stand up,
Drawn titanic-like against the evening sky
And seem to grope among the galaxy of stars.

The ship moves on challenged by the unruly sea as the waves beat hard against it, sending up the splashing foam that in daylight glitters like many beautiful jewels, but at night is not seen. The

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

battle between the waves and the ship goes on and on, but victory comes inevitably,

But the ship steams proudly on in its iron-clad armor
Toward the West over the great deep,
A persevering shuttle, which in unceasing movement
Draws forth and back from world to world.

There was something intimately personal in the concluding observation for the poet who on several occasions was a part of the shuttle that brought him to and from and from and to his New and Old Worlds.

The poem *Till Amerika* (To America) written in 1870, as Hjalmar Edgren was ready to leave Sweden, provides an interesting insight into his thinking about emigrating to the United States. Moreover, poetry, in a unique way, often distills in a highly sensitive form the reasons that may motivate the outward act. When Hjalmar Edgren pondered the alternatives of remaining in Sweden or emigrating to America he used the dialogue form involving six episodes. The prospective emigrant is challenged by two questions: "Why do you always send your gaze to the distant land beyond the western waves?" "What do I seek to gain?" The answer is quite clear:

My spirit presses toward the western world,
Where the seed of the future grows in luxuriant soil,
Where life boldly launches out in clear new forms,
Where light and truth transform.

But he is challenged by his opponent's question as to the wisdom of going to America:

Where nothing yet has matured,
Where selfishness lulls to sleep all noble effort,
Where art and knowledge are in mammon's pay,
If you seek light, stay here.

Although he listens to the plea, he considers the criticism

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

foolish and then replies:

I wish to see, I wish to feel that life,
Which surges forth, undwarfed by customs bonds,
And with proud pulse, beats full of promise
in the Western land.

The inquisition continues as the antagonist makes a plea for duty to homeland and reminds him of the meadows and forests mirrored in blue water, the childhood retreats amidst the birches, and all that he loves in the place of his birth. The poet does not deny these facts and writes:

I will always remember my beautiful homeland,
Whose pictures are printed eternally in my soul:
Here my heart could dream its greatest dreams,
Here is hidden all that I most esteem:
Wherever fate casts me on my pilgrim journey
I will always long for the dear world of my birth.

But something else transcends the beauty of nature and remembrances of the past,

True, much that is good is found in northern lands,
But much that is evil too,
And freedom implies much more than you know
Since its bright light shines forevermore.

Since the poet cannot be shaken from his determination, he is told,

Farewell, pursue then your mind's illness,
And go to seek the phantom, which you will never find.

The emigrant also says, "Farewell," confident that beneath the stormy surface of life, there is an anchor, and although he may be tossed by the waves of uncertainty, in the midst of struggle and effort he is certain that,

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

The goal I seek is where my longing is,
I will find it too some day,
Behind the peaks of toil.

The feeling of the immigrant for the homeland is shared sensitively in *Mitt hemland* (My Homeland). The poet has a question which he seeks to answer:

What is the power, that lights this longing,
To you, my dear homeland?
What speeds up the pulse, what causes the yearning,
As my thoughts fly to your shore?

Many factors are portrayed as the source for the immigrant's yearning. He recalls the great traditions and the glory of his country, but that is not the source. Then he reflects on all the beauty and splendor of nature:

The dark forests around the clear water
So deep, so varied and blue,
In which the light of day and the stars of night,
Find their marvelous mirror true.

There are truly the abiding remembrances of nature, but a power of another kind "lulls my heart the stronger." That fact is the stark reality of separation,

A constant feeling that I parted from the North,
Always to remain a stranger.

Although he will be a stranger in a faraway land, the immigrant has a great treasury of remembrances that transcend both nature and memory:

Oh homeland, with you my memory is blended,
My heart beat is your heart beat too,
With your lungs I breathe,
And with your tongue I speak.

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

The poem closes with a kind of benediction. The immigrant is confident because, "So full of hope I see your future days." The mines will produce needed minerals, the fields will supply abundant food, the customs and laws will be enriched, absurd power will be resisted, and "the portrait of true freedom" will emerge. The reader feels that the immigrant regrets that he will no longer share the beauty of nature, the glories of the traditions, and the forward stride of progress and freedom. But there is still the promise of the future,

How blessed the day, when I will return
To you, to you, my homeland.

Although Hjalmar Edgren's poems infrequently have their setting in the American scene, he occasionally uses that locale. His residence in western America was in a period early enough to make him familiar with the contribution of the pioneers to the building of that area. He had seen the long lines of prairie schooners or "mover wagons" as they journeyed slowly over the Nebraska plains and hills. In *Præriens farkost* (The Prairie Schooner) he considers the role of the pioneer:

An ocean—a desolate prairie ocean,
Rolls into our view with an endless succession of hills,
Like broad swelling waves, which after a storm
Have slowly stopped in petrified form.

The traveler is confronted with an endless expanse of space, until a great interruption comes into view,

An ocean, with only expanding horizons day after day,
For the traveler bound for the West faraway,
Until the Rocky Mountains' great wall
With their white towers rise tall.

But the viewer of the silent scene catches a glimpse of a moving object,

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

And on the ocean's expansive space,
When the moon's shadows dart apace,
A little gray-white sail appears,
By the light of the evening star it steers.

The prairie schooner has a rich cargo of tools, household goods, clothing, and above all, people, with high hopes for the future. The pioneer's wagon with its contents of persons and things under its dirty, patched "sail," moves on through wind and storm. The countryside is desolate with its dry, sunburned surface, where an occasional brown stream struggles to move and where buffalo grass is nature's covering mantle. The central factors in the prairie ship are the people who ride in it:

The skipper is a man from distant lands
With sunburned skin and calloused hands,
His crew upon the fragile ark—
His wife, more self-sacrificing than strong.

The poet portrays sensitively that the skipper and his wife did not know what was destined to be the meaning of this journey for the future as he speaks to them,

You were the wave, which did portend,
The great flood-tide, bustling without end.

The deep implications are then described,

You were the undaunted pioneer,
Who showed the way for the great throng,
You were only one of a "lost hope"
Who opened the desert's gates.

The lonely prairie schooner in slow movement across the great ocean of prairie is a symbol and fact of the future. The wide prairie no longer will know the Indians and the buffalo. Luxuriant crops, fine homes, and happy people will replace the quiet desolation that was disturbed only by the movement of the prairie

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

schooner. The gray-white sail is seen no more and the skipper and his wife from distant shores have moved beyond the wide horizon of time, but,

Homes and villages quickly grow,
And cities by their industry and progress
 render eyes aglow,
A free and happy people inhabit the desert,
Which now blooms like a rose.

In *Sekelgryning* (Dawn of a Century) written in 1901, Hjalmar Edgren confronts the present with the challenge of the past and the hope for the future. The years have brought opportunity that has not always been fully used. But the struggle goes on,

The battle is the same,
Light, and still more light,
And a pillar of fire with its flame,
Leads through the darkness of the night.

The journey is long and uncertain. Somewhere in the future lies the promised land but it is shrouded in a misty haze. As the poet confronts the new century, the legatee of unfinished business for the family of man, a series of questions arise:

What can lighten, what can lessen,
Pain and need upon the suffering earth?
What can stifle falsehood's power,
Hate and war and fratricide?

The questions loom large; answers are difficult. New paths must be discovered, new efforts expended, new thought let loose upon the world,

Thousands of dark questions,
Weave a thick cover over the promised land,
But, up and seek, up and strive,
Upon the pathless desert land.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

Since Hjalmar Edgren's life was so intimately involved in academic life, it is understandable that he devoted poetic talent to this area of concern. As a free, independent spirit who subscribed to no cults or dogmas, he was a champion and practitioner of free thought. He identifies his ideas in the poem *Tankefrihet* (Freedom of Thought) as translated into English by L. A. Fossler.⁴

Let forms of faith and thought have free exchange!
Why should'st thou fear though truth's immensity
Break up in countless rays before thy searching glance?
Thou who hast never seen, what human eye ne'er saw,
Truth's limpid source, truth's waters crystal clear.
Not like a diamond's constant pattern is man's soul,
With facets cut and polished following set norms:
No! This gem's facets vary endlessly.
Reflecting and refracting Heaven's glories
In ways and manners diverse, infinite.
The hands of Nature play in endless shiftings
Across the harp we call the human soul.
Now indistinct and harsh, now clear and sweetly sounding,
As gale or zephyr sweeps the human chords.

The onslaught on set forms gives us our dearest hopes,
For truth is only born through endless change and strife.
These, strife and change, these are the laws of life,
Of Nature, whether matter, whether mind.
Decay and death lurk in the stagnant waters.
This conflict cannot cease until—we trust—
In some far-off eternal day
Truth's Truth will throw his loftiest span
Across the pillared arches of men's thoughts
And join them into a House Beautiful,
A Temple, ready for His worship and His praise.

When the University of Nebraska observed its charter day in 1886, Hjalmar Edgren's poem written for that occasion was part of the festivities. After tracing the founding of the university in the pioneer era and identifying its contribution in promoting the

The Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren

life of learning and stimulating understanding of the arts and sciences, he concluded with these lines:

God grant us strength to work for that alone:
And when in time the last foundation stone
Of what was built lies crumbling in the dust,
Shall still our work be potent, as we trust.
For though all earthly forms decay and die,
Yea, though the sun be stricken from the sky,
And though a million stars be mown
From the eternal fields where they were sown,
Yet living truth, eternal and sublime,
Shall not be blasted by the breath of Time.

IX

A Composite Portrait

The quest in biography is to describe the life and thought of an individual and from these factors fashion a portrait that will make known the nature of the man. Nothing can really supersede the evidence that comes from close study of the actions and ideas of the individual himself. However, there may be additional resources elsewhere in the evidence that comes from friends and associates, who can often provide points of view that are not always fully revealed by the person under study. Moreover, special circumstances may contribute additional insight, and this becomes increasingly meaningful when an individual lives in two worlds and is confronted by two loyalties. Fortunately, friends and associates have added to our information about Hjalmar Edgren, and his own words have enlightened us about his two worlds and dual loyalty.

The portrait by an artist combines the physical features of his subject with intangible aspects that often give life to it. Friends of Hjalmar Edgren have witnessed to both aspects. Professor Laurence A. Fossler, a colleague and friend at the University of Nebraska, has written:

Dr. Edgren was a man of large caliber, both mentally and physically. A markedly strong yet fine-featured, intellectual face, expressive of the scholar's keen interest in the field of inquiry and research; keen, kindly eyes set under an ample, broad brow; broad-shouldered, erect, soldierly, dignified, commanding attention and respect—thus Dr. Edgren rises before those who knew him.¹

A Composite Portrait

This sturdy, reliable, and brilliant man had a varied career that brought him on four occasions to the United States, resulting, after his twenty-first birthday, in his having lived seventeen years in Sweden and twenty-five years in the United States. Professor Karl Warburg, a colleague at *Göteborgs Högskola*, and at the Nobel Institute, has pointed out that,

Hjalmar Edgren's character consisted of a strange blending of vacillation and perseverance, but when once he had chosen an alternative, he pursued it energetically. He was a brave soldier, zealous linguistic researcher, energetic teacher, and many-sided author. He was loved and respected wherever he worked for his modest, forthright, and faithful personal qualities. Like John Ericsson, his countryman from Värmland, he belonged to both Sweden and America and united warm love for the land of his birth with ardent devotion to the great nation on the other side of the Atlantic.²

Professor Per Johan Vising, a linguist, friend, and colleague at Göteborg writes about "the strange zig-zag contours of his exterior life that diverge so distinctly from the ordinary man's experiences." He attributed the varied career in part to his birth in beautiful Värmland which aroused in him "the dreaming longing to see what was beyond the high range of hills and the great expanse of water." Edgren was one of more than 100,000 emigrants from Värmland who came to seek the promise of American life. But the restlessness in Hjalmar Edgren's spirit was productive as Vising points out:

Whatever position he held, he filled it with the utmost conscientiousness and with the outpouring of amazing energy. His honorable and honest character and his elevated idealistic view of life allowed him nothing less, although he was not lacking in an eminently practical disposition.³

Bengt Hildebrand, the well-known Swedish editor and biographer, also attributed certain aspects of Hjalmar Edgren's career to his background in Värmland, together with the fact that "he had a strong longing for freedom." Hildebrand summed up his appraisal by writing that, "Edgren was an honest and honorable

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

man who had a capable and forceful personality. His calm exterior concealed at first his restless temperament, a combination of vacillation and tenacity. Unostentatious, straight forward, and steadfast, he won many friends in Sweden and America.”⁴

Hjalmar Edgren received wide recognition as a scholar. The versatility of his interests involving Sanskrit, Latin, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian, and English indicated the broad scope of his efforts. Professor L. A. Sherman, a colleague at the University of Nebraska, has written:

Dr. Edgren was a model scholar, not of the German but rather of the Scandinavian type. He never worked for the sake of knowing, but illustrated throughout his life Emerson's idea of the American scholar, not the learning man, but man learning. In Sanskrit, Edgren stood high, nearly even with the three or four Sanskrit specialists in the country. In Indo-European philology he was as well-versed as any American. In French, he contributed materially to the working scholarship of the language first by his grammar with its unique historical features, and by his dictionary which unpretentiously contributed to a better understanding of the puzzles of Gallic etymology.⁵

Hjalmar Edgren combined in a distinctive way the disciplined life of a productive scholar with the relaxed, open manner of a successful teacher. Professor C. E. Bessey, who knew him well at the University of Nebraska, has written that, “He did not grow old. He did not grow away from his pupils. . . . While he was honored by his colleagues for his ripe scholarship, he was loved by his pupils for his ready sympathy and quick understanding; and when his native country called him again, his going was mourned as a distinct personal loss by those who had come under his instruction.” Bessey concluded by observing, “yet the hope still lingered with us that some day we might see his genial face again upon the campus.” Professor Vising, in reflecting opinion derived from experiences in Sweden, joined in praise for Hjalmar Edgren by writing that, “He became for his students as well as for his friends and in his whole journey through life a man who aroused noble and elevated thoughts.”⁶

The personal resources that made possible the distinguished

scholar and teacher have been described by Professor Fossler:

Thus I learned to value his simple tastes, his unostentatious dignity, the catholicity of his sympathies, and the gentle forcefulness of his character. I witnessed (and often chided) his indefatigable industry and application to any task he might have in hand. . . . Professor Edgren was a man of wide sympathies and clearness of judgment, very democratic in his views of life, a lover of freedom and the rights of man. Rather radical in his views, he was thoroughly sincere in his examination of forms and theories and tenets of whatever sort. Openness to valid arguments, calm reasoning, sanity of judgment, insistence on proof—these constituted his intellectual fiber.⁷

The life of every man includes the secret places where unanswered questions remain. When Professor Vising, a friend and admirer of Hjalmar Edgren, cited “the strange, zig-zag contours of his exterior life which so distinctly diverged from the ordinary man’s experiences,” he was truly describing a vital aspect. Some of those contours are more understandable than others. For instance, his service as a volunteer in the Union army during the Civil War was clearly a call to share in resolving the issue of freedom and slavery. The successive shifting of professional and personal life between Sweden and America is not so clearly identifiable. A more normal response would have been to live a settled life as a scholar and teacher in his homeland. What motivates a man may be the result of a combination of factors—love of adventure, boredom with the ordinary, dissatisfaction with circumstances, financial considerations, the urge to achieve, an overwhelming restlessness—all contributed to Hjalmar Edgren’s odyssey.

Although it is difficult to evaluate effectively the impact of ideas upon a man’s response, a consideration of their relationship to Hjalmar Edgren’s career seems appropriate. His early impressions of America may have been decisive in fashioning his perennial urge to leave the Old World for the New World. In a series of articles on America in *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning* in 1872-1873, his response to America is clearly identified and in this response he compares the American situation with that in Sweden.

Hjalmar Edgren was greatly impressed with “the simple and

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

frank manner” of the Americans. He found this desirable trait to have its roots in the social structure of America in contrast with that in Sweden: “When people are divided into separate classes, according to birth, occupation, or wealth, certain customs, ways of thinking and rights grow up within those classes that sharply divide them. Barriers are raised, which are protected with the greatest care; and it is within these barriers that class prejudices have unhampered growth.” Edgren was concerned with the consequences: “This leads often to two different but nevertheless closely related phenomena: haughty and scornful arrogance on one side; abject servility and the killing of all manly independence on the other.” Hjalmar Edgren was favorably impressed with America because, “it is easy to observe everywhere that when the customs become simpler the more the walls of separation between people are torn down. How decisively will not this situation prevail in a country like America where so many circumstances exert a leveling influence and where equality is the whole spirit of the people.” Moreover, he found that, “The American’s respect for work forms one of his most beautiful characteristics. . . . As long as work is honored and idleness is a shame, there is little room for pride to develop.”⁸

Hjalmar Edgren later pondered the secret of the American pattern in its relationship to immigration. He viewed the large numbers of immigrants who spread out in various sections of America to make their contributions to the symphony of American life. He found the secret of these new Americans, in these words which he wrote in 1898: “It is true then that the European in America feels himself comparatively independent of the barriers and class prejudices which had once repressed him if they did not debase him.”⁹

Although Edgren was impressed with the simplicity of manners and the general absence of class distinctions, he was concerned by some of the implications when he wrote:

These characteristics which identify the American so advantageously, are nevertheless mixed with national pride and vanity, which often are very narrow. . . . The American tells himself every day that freedom and enlightenment are only understood by him. The European

compliments his foreign guest about his country; the American wants you to compliment his country, and if you will not do it, he will do so himself.¹⁰

Education in America impressed Edgren favorably from his early years and throughout his life. He believed that, "A republican government's only safe foundation is public morality and general enlightenment. This is acknowledged without any doubt in America and there prevails as a result an energetic and untiring effort in religious and educational circles." He was enthusiastic about the ready availability of educational opportunity from elementary schools through colleges and universities. He was surprised by the rigorous structure of American education, which provided limited freedom of choice, and by the restrictions placed upon students relative to personal conduct. No "Cornellist" (Cornell University student) drank or smoked, a pattern that was changed in many American colleges and universities before Edgren had concluded his career in America. Although he felt that many American colleges and universities were lacking in intellectual discipline and scholarly emphasis, he pointed out that some American universities were equal to those in Europe. In 1902, in a survey of education in America he wrote, "I am readily convinced that the people of the United States regard ignorance as the enemy of freedom, and that the Union is moving towards a future of great intellectual achievement—an achievement which most certainly the Old World will see as a threat from the West to her cultural hegemony just as it now feels about the threat to its industrial hegemony, and which we should earnestly study rather than disregard by a conceited shrugging of the shoulders." The emphasis on educational opportunity was an important factor in Edgren's devotion to American life.¹¹

A strikingly impressive feature in America as viewed by Hjalmar Edgren was family life. His experience convinced him that, "It is not only in the community, but in the family itself, that democratic principles are held in such high regard. Dictatorial principles are discountenanced in the latter as well as in the former. . . . Children learn to feel from the earliest years that they are members of the family and this feeling grows in clarity with the passing of the

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

years. This freedom in upbringing, like all freedom, has always two sides. Rightly understood and maintained it is a blessing, left without attention it has many perils." In observing the development in America, Edgren wrote that, "No one who has visited in America is unmindful of the independence in manner and the early maturity in understanding which characterizes American children." ¹²

Hjalmar Edgren also made another interesting observation in reflecting on the European situation when he wrote: "There are many who have borne the burden of a lack of confidence in themselves and inability to depend on their own judgment which strictness in the home had created or at least developed. . . and it is not difficult for me after having seen the different types of upbringing to explain why the Europeans reveal an inner doubt that so seldom troubles an American. . . . Freedom does not mean license, far from it; it means that rules appear under other and milder forms." Although Edgren preferred the American pattern to that of the European, he realized that there were also some problems: "It is of course a little trying for one who is accustomed to a child's or young person's respectful manner and attitude towards their elders to reconcile himself with the bold judgment, the disrespectful self-will and independence together with the lack of deference and humility which occasionally characterizes the adolescent American man or woman." ¹³

The American experience undoubtedly contained in it certain elements that contributed to a kind of tension with the pattern and structure of society which Hjalmar Edgren knew in his homeland. Professor Fossler, his close friend at the University of Nebraska, wrote about Hjalmar Edgren:

He had lived too long in the broad free West to look with easy tolerance upon the caste and class distinctions of the Old World. True, when on this side of the Atlantic, much of our newness and crudeness and uncereemonious 'push' grated upon him. Sometimes it amused him, sometimes it irritated him. Yet, despite it all, he regarded it as a truism that 'the future belongs to America.' If he loved Sweden, as indeed he did, it was because of its glorious history, because of its achievements, because of the honesty and sturdiness of the sons and daughters to which it gave birth and, forsooth, because it was the land where his cradle had rocked. ¹⁴

A Composite Portrait

The two worlds of Hjalmar Edgren were a source of great inspiration to him. Sweden was the country of his birth and there he struck deep roots in the native soil. He possessed kindly remembrances of family and friends and of the abiding beauty of the countryside. He served his country well in higher education at Lund and Göteborg, and during the last years of his life, at the Nobel Institute in Stockholm. He shared his deep feeling for Sweden in three volumes of poetry and in many newspaper and periodical articles. Hjalmar Edgren was only twenty-one years old when he began life in the New World during the crisis years of the Civil War. He served that world with distinction as a scholar and educator at Yale and the University of Nebraska. Moreover, he effectively interpreted America to Swedes at home by translating into their language many masterpieces of American literature and by writing numerous articles about various aspects of life in his new home in the West. Dr. W. A. Granville, an old Yale friend, quotes the closing lines of the last letter which Hjalmar Edgren wrote to him: "My affection for Yale—for America as a whole—abides with me here. Were I not too much in the twilight, I might return yet."¹⁵ Hjalmar Edgren belongs to both Sweden and the United States, a distinguished citizen of both the Old and of the New World.

NOTES

Chapter I

1. The sources for the early history of the Edgren family include the following: Anders H. Edgren, *En Värmlandssläkt från Johan Edgren (1724-1789) härstammande släkter* (Stockholm, 1923); A. G. Th. Edgren, *Släkten Edgrens stamtafla* (Lund, 1894); *Husförhörslängd för Nysund år 1817-1821, Håkanbol*; *Husförhörslängd för Elfsbacka år 1836-1840*; Anders Edestam, *Karlstads stifts herdaminne III*. (Karlstad, 1968), pp. 359-60.
2. *Födelsebok för Elfsbacka för 1840*.
3. The boyhood life of Alexis and Hjalmar Edgren is described in J. A. Edgren, *Minnen från hafvet, kriget och missionsfältet* (Chicago, 1878), p. 5.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
7. *En Värmlandssläkt från Johan Edgren*, p. 28; *Släkten Edgrens stamtafla*, pp. 37-38; *Leijonhuvuds ny svensk släktbok* (Stockholm, 1902), IV, 251; Edgren, *Minnen*, pp. 5, 8.

Chapter II

1. C. O. Nordensvan, *Ur Värmlands regementes historia* (Stockholm, 1911), p. 229; *Leijonhuvuds ny svensk släktbok*, IV, 251. *Student examen* was a terminal examination which enabled the student to enroll in a university.
2. Nels Hokanson, *Swedish Immigrants in Lincoln's Time* (New York, 1942), pp. 70-71; 81-93; 122-30; E. W. Olson, *History of the Swedes of Illinois, Part I* (Chicago, 1908), pp. 625-704.
3. Hjalmar Edgren, "Sjöstriden på Hampton Roads, 1862," *Prärieblomman kalender för 1903* (Rock Island, 1903), p. 15.
4. *En Värmlandssläktbok från Johan Edgren*, p. 29.
5. The source of Hjalmar Edgren's eye-witness account is a letter which he wrote to his parents shortly after the battle of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*. The letter is included in the memoirs of Hjalmar's brother, *Minnen*, referred to previously. The sections used here are from a lecture that Hjalmar Edgren presented before the Labor Association of Göteborg, Mar. 19, 1892, "Description of the Naval Battle of Hampton Roads," p. 1.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
9. Hjalmar Edgren, "En förrymd slaf. Verklighetsbild," *Prärieblomman kalender för 1900*, pp. 99-101.
10. *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D. C., 1887), Series I, XVII, 269-70, 272, 282-83; Edgren, "En förrymd slaf. Verklighetsbild." pp. 103-4.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

11. Edgren, *Minnen*, pp. 71-72, 76.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.
13. *En Värmlandssläktbok från Johan Edgren*, p. 29; Nordensvan, *Ur Värmlands regementes historia*, p. 229.

Chapter III

1. "Ett och annat från Amerika," *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*, Dec. 19, 1872.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Emigrationsutredningen, Bilaga XII. Svenskarna i utlandet* (Stockholm, 1911), p. 110.
6. "August Hjalmar Edgren," *Yale Alumni Weekly*, May 11, 1904. p. 691.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 692.
8. *Ibid.*, *Leijonhuvuds ny svensk släktbok, IV*, 252.
9. Vide Andrew Hilen, *Longfellow and Scandinavia. A Study of the Poet's Relationship with the Northern Languages and Literature* (Yale Studies in English, Vol. 107, 1970). Tegnér wrote that he encouraged Longfellow to complete the translation, "in order that I may be able to say that Frithiof has been well translated into at least one language." Tegnér was not pleased with Longfellow's translation of *Nattvardsbarnen* (Confirmation Children). pp. 52-53, 56-57.
10. *Yale Alumni Weekly*, May 11, p. 692.

Chapter IV

1. Hjalmar Edgren to S. A. Hedlund, Aug. 11, 1877.
2. Hjalmar Edgren to August Wijkander, Oct. 31, 1879.
3. *Släkten Edgrens stamtafla*, pp. 40-41.
4. The four articles are found in 1. *Lunds universitets årsskrift, XVII* (1881), 1-17; 2. *Ny svensk tidskrift*, 1883, pp. 481-507; 3. *Nordisk tidskrift*, 1884, pp. 88-101; 4. *Deutsche literaturzeitung*, 1884, pp. 390-91.
5. The poetry of Hjalmar Edgren is discussed in Chapter VIII.
6. Hjalmar Edgren to S. A. Hedlund, Nov. 9, 1889.
7. John A. Enander, "Professor A. H. Edgren" *Prärieblomman kalender för 1905*, pp. 21-22.
8. Hjalmar Edgren to August Wijkander, July 6, 1885.
9. *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1886.
10. *Biennial Report of the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska*, Nov. 30, 1886, p. 8; *Ninth Biennial Report of the Board of Regents for the University of Nebraska*, Dec. 1, 1886, p. 3.

Notes

11. *Semi-Centennial Anniversary Book. The University of Nebraska, 1869-1919* (Lincoln, 1919), p. 38-39.
12. *Biennial Report of the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska*, Dec. 1, 1886, p. 55.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 55-56.
14. *Semi-Centennial Anniversary Book*, p. 135.
15. *Biennial Report of the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska*, Dec. 1, 1886, p. 56; *Ninth Biennial Report of the Board of Regents*, Dec. 1, 1888, p. 17; Hjalmar Edgren to the Board of Regents, June 17, 1890.
16. Hjalmar Edgren to August Wijkander, Aug. 27, 1887.
17. *Ibid.*, Nov. 19, 1887.
18. Hjalmar Edgren to S. A. Hedlund, Nov. 9, 1889.
19. Hjalmar Edgren to August Wijkander, June 26, 1890; Hjalmar Edgren to Board of Regents, Dec. 12, 1890.

Chapter V

1. Hjalmar Edgren to S. A. Hedlund, Nov. 9, 1889 and Feb. 7, 1891.
2. *Ibid.*, Feb. 7, 1891.
3. Hjalmar Edgren, *Göteborgs Höskola. En blick på hennes uppkonst och ordnande* (Göteborg, 1891), pp. 4-6.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 11-12.
5. *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*, Sept. 15, 1891.
6. Edgren, *Göteborgs Höskola*, pp. 21-22.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-19.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
10. *Göteborgs Höskolas katalog, 1891-1893*; Edgren, *Göteborgs Höskola*, pp. 27-39; *Göteborgs Universitet* was established July 1, 1954, with the merger of *Göteborgs Höskola* and Göteborgs school of medicine.
11. *Göteborgs Höskolas katalog, 1891-1893*.
12. Hjalmar Edgren to Esaias Tegnér, Dec. 4, 1892.
13. *Göteborgs Höskolas protokoll, 1892-1893*, pp. 188-192. Edgren sought greater independence for his institution.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
15. Hjalmar Edgren to August Wijkander, Oct. 2, 1893.
16. Hjalmar Edgren to Per Johan Vising. The letter is dated the 15th, 1894 but no month is indicated; Hjalmar Edgren to August Wijkander, Sept. 26, 1898.

Chapter VI

1. "Report of the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska," June 6, 1893; *The Hesperian*, Sept. 27, 1893.
2. "Report of the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska," June 11, 1894; Hjalmar Edgren to the chancellor, June 7, 1899.

An Immigrant's Two Worlds

3. Alvin S. Johnson to Mrs. W. E. Barkley, Nov. 13, 1961; Alvin S. Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress. An Autobiography* (New York, 1952), p. 99.
4. Robert N. Manley, *Centennial History of the University of Nebraska, I. Frontier University, 1869-1919* (Lincoln, 1969), p. 136.
5. *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Regents of the University of Nebraska, 1899*, p. 16; Minutes of faculty for the specific dates listed.
6. "Minutes of the Board of Regents, Apr. 17, 1896."
7. *University of Nebraska Calendar, 1895-1896*, pp. 37-40; *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Regents, 1897*, pp. 14-15.
8. *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Regents, 1899*, pp. 16-17; "Report of the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska," June 5-7, 1900, p. 4.
9. *The Sombbrero, 1898* (Lincoln), p. 69.
10. *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Regents, 1899*, p. 17.
11. *Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Regents, 1901*, p. 18.
12. *A Compendious French Grammar* (Boston, 1894); *A Brief Spanish Grammar with Historical Introduction* (Boston, 1899); *A Brief Italian Grammar* (New York, 1897); *A Brief German Grammar*, with Laurence Fossler (New York, 1897); *Les Origines de la France Contemporaine, par H. A. Taine* (New York, 1895); *L' Expedition de Bonaparte en Egypt par Thiers* (New York, 1897); *Le Tour du Monde en Quatrevingts Jours par Jules Verne* (Boston, 1894). *Vide also Leijonhuvuds ny svensk släktbok, IV, 251.*
13. *Svenska journalen* (Omaha), Aug. 29, 1895.
14. Hjalmar Edgren to Per Johan Vising 15th, 1894. No month is cited.
15. *Ibid.*, Feb. 14, 1894, Apr. 10, 1894, July 2, 1897.
16. Hjalmar Edgren to August Wijkander, Sept. 26, 1898, to Esaias Tegnér, Oct. 12, 1898, and to Per Johan Vising, Aug. 12, 1899.
17. Hjalmar Edgren to B.P.E. Lidén, Jan. 28, 1900.
18. Hjalmar Edgren to Esaias Tegnér, Oct. 10, 1900.
19. Hjalmar Edgren to Chancellor and Board of Regents, Feb. 13, 1901.
20. "Minutes of the Board of Regents, Apr. 10, 1901."

Chapter VII

1. *Svenska Amerikanaren*, May 21, 1901.
2. *Ibid.*,
3. *Ibid.*,
4. Anders Österling, "The Literary Prize," in *Nobel, the Man and His Prizes* (New York, 1962), H. Schück, R. Sohlman, et al. eds., p. 75.
5. Österling, pp. 80-82.
6. "Statutes, Comprising special Regulations for the Award by the Swedish Academy from the Nobel Foundation," *Nobel, the Man and His Prizes*, p. 663; Österling, pp. 83-85; H. Schück, *Svenska akademien historia* (Stockholm, 1939) *VII*, 533.
7. Schück *VII*, 533.
8. Österling, p. 90; Schück, *VII*, 534.

Notes

9. Jacob Letterstedt (1796-1862), Swedish philanthropist, included among his many benefactions the Letterstedt prize for distinction in translating literary works. For a discussion of his career, *vide* Franklin Scott, "Jacob Letterstedt and Nordic Cooperation," in *The Immigration of Ideas* (Rock Island, 1968), J. Iverne Dowie and J. Thomas Tredway, eds., pp. 15-28. The Royal Order of the North Star was established in Sweden in 1748 to provide recognition for achievement in a variety of civic and cultural fields.
10. J. A. Edgren to Hjalmar Edgren, Dec. 27, 1902.
11. Interview with Mrs. W. E. Barkley, June 18, 1971.
12. *Yale Alumni Weekly*, May 11, 1904, p. 691.
13. Telegram from Carl Gustaf af Wirsén to Mrs. Hjalmar Edgren, Dec. 13, 1903; *Svenska dagbladet*, Dec. 11, 1903, and Dec. 17, 1903; *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*, Dec. 10, 1903.
14. *Lincoln State Journal*, Feb. 15, 1904.

Chapter VIII

1. Bo Bergman, "Svensk lyrik," *Ord och bild*, 1905 (Stockholm) pp. 454-55.
2. Hans Emil Larsson, "Brustna återljud," *Nordisk tidskrift*, 1905, p. 156.
3. Bergman, pp. 454-55.
4. The translation is by Laurence Fossler in the *Yale Alumni Weekly*, May 11, 1904, p. 694.

Chapter IX

1. Laurence Fossler in *Semi-Centennial Anniversary Book*, p. 133.
2. *Nordisk familjebok* (Stockholm, 1907), VI, 1350.
3. *Göteborgs kungl. vetenskaps-och vitterhetssamhälles handlingar, fjärde delen*, XI (1908), 22-24.
4. *Svensk biografiskt lexikon* (Stockholm, 1949), XII, 127.
5. *Lincoln State Journal*, Feb. 15, 1904.
6. *Ibid.*, *Göteborgs kungl. vetenskaps-och vitterhetssamhälles handlingar*, p. 24.
7. *Semi-Centennial Anniversary Book*, p. 137.
8. *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*, Dec. 19, 1872.
9. Hjalmar Edgren, *Sommarferier i Montezumas land* (Stockholm, 1898), p. 7.
10. *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*, Dec. 19, 1872.
11. Hjalmar Edgren, "Förenta Staternas offentliga läroverk," *Nordisk tidskrift*, 1902, p. 264.
12. *Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning*, Oct. 8, 1872.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Semi-Centennial Anniversary Book*, p. 137.
15. *Yale Alumni Weekly*, May 11, 1904, p. 694.

INDEX

- Academic freedom, 36
 Agneteberg, 3; description of, 3-4, 5
 American Oriental Society, 19
 Americans, described by Hjalmar Edgren, 86-88
 Andrews, Chancellor E. Benjamin, 62
 Arvika, 3, 63
- Battle of *Monitor* and *Merrimac*, 9-11
 Barber, Prof. Grove E., 62
 Berger, *Brukspatron* Alex., 3
 Bergman, Bo, 64-65
 Bessey, Prof. Charles E., characterization of Hjalmar Edgren, 84
 Bryant, William Allen, 19
- Canfield, Chancellor James H., 43
 Chautauqua Assembly, 30
 Cornell University, 17, 87
- Daily Nebraskan*, 63
Djursholm, 60-61
Docent at Lund, 21, 23
- Eberstein, Walborg, Ingrid, and Rosa, 61
 Edgren, Anders Gustaf (brother), 3
 Edgren, Anna Mathilda (daughter), birth of, 25; illness and death of, 61-62
 Edgren, Arthur (son), birth of, 25, 62
 Edgren, Axel Albert (brother), 3
 Edgren, Axel Hjalmar (father), 2-4
 Edgren, Mrs. Axel Hjalmar (Johanna Mathilda Berger), mother, 2-4
 Edgren, Carl Leonard (brother), 3
 Edgren, Hedvig Anna Ulrika (sister), 3
 Edgren, Hilda Carolina Mathilda (sister), 3
 Edgren, Hjalmar (full name: August Hjalmar), Agneteberg, description of life at, 5-6; Americans described in newspaper articles, 86-88; birth and baptism, 2-3; burial service of, 63; Chautauqua Assembly, 30, 31; death (1903), 61-62; characterizations of Edgren: by C. E. Bessey, 84; by L. A. Fossler, 82, 85, 88; by Bengt Hildebrand, 83-84; by L. A. Sherman, 84; by Per Johan Vising, 84; by Karl Warburg, 83; dinner in honor of (Chicago), 55-60; education in U.S.A., description of, 87; emigrants, description of, 16-17; emigration to U.S.A., 15-16; engagement to Marianne Steendorff, 23; *Göteborgs Högskola*, years as *rektor*, 34-42; graduate study at Yale, 18, 19, 21; home and library in Lincoln, 50; illness of, 11, 13, 20, 60; Knight of the Royal Order of the North Star (1903), 60; Letterstedt Prize, awarded (1903), 60; Lund University, association with, 21-25; memorial services, 62-63; marriage (1880), 23; Mexico, travel in, 49; Nebraska, University of, relationship with, 25-32, 43-54; New York State Volunteers, officer in, 9; Nobel Institute, association with, 53, 58-60; officer in Swedish army, 8, 13-14; parental family, 3; poetry by Edgren, 64-81; *student examen* completed, 8; student years: at Karlstad and Stockholm, 6; at Berlin, 23; at Cornell University, 17; at Yale, 18-21; teaching years: at St. Quentin, France, 13; at Bisbee's Military Academy, 18; at Yale and Sheffield Scientific School, 21; at Lund University (*docent*), 23; at *Lunds realskola*, 23; at *Göteborgs Högskola*, 33-43; at University of Nebraska, 26-32, 43-54; Sweden, return to, in 1863, 13; in 1880, 21; in 1891, 32; in 1901, 55; Union army, service in, 9-13; *Villa Ektomte*, 60; Värmalands regiment, member of, 8, 13-14; Wijkander, Prof. August, letters from Hjalmar Edgren, 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 42.
- Edgren, Hjalmar, Articles by,
 "Ett och Annat," 85-88
 "On the Vowel Increase in the French Verb" (1874), 18
 "On the Relation of the *Rig-Veda* between the Palatial and Labial Vowels..." (1877), 19
 "Contributions to the History of Verb Inflections in Sanskrit" (1877), 19
 "On the Verbal Roots of the Sanskrit Language and the Sanskrit Grammarians" (1878), 19
 "The Kindred Words of German and English Exhibited..." (1880), 20
 "Chautauquarörelsen" (1880), 30-31
 "Statistical and Discursive Notes..." (1881), 24
 "Quelques observations sur l'element roman de l'anglais" (1883), 23
 "Svensk litteratur i Amerika" (1883), 24
 "Buddhismen, dess uppkomst och lära" (1883), 24
 "En av John Ericssons triumfer" (1884), 24
 "S. Sörensens om Mahabharatas stillning..." (1884), 24
 "Indiens sagor på vandring i världen" (1884), 24
 "Om Amerikas fornninnen" (1885), 30
 "En ung stad och en ung stat..."

Index

- (1886), 30
 "Skilda åsikter rörande de indoeuropeiska folkens ursprungliga hem och kultur" (1886), 31
 "Det gamla Indiens bildspråk. . ." (1887), 31
 "On the Propriety of Retaining Eight Verb-classes in Sanskrit" (1888), 31
 "Högskolor, deras uppkomst och utbildning" (1891), 40
 "De nyare språkens studium vid våra läroverk" (1891), 40
 "Om samuppföstran i Amerika" (1892), 40
 "Språkhistoriska ordböcker" (1892), 40
 "Evolution by Metaphore, as Illustrated by Sanskrit and English" (1896), 49
 "American Graduate Schools" (1898), 49
 "Spanish Gradation in the Present System" (1899), 49
 "Topical Digest of *Rig-Veda*" (1899), 49
 "Swinburne" (1904), 49
 Edgren, Hjalmar, Books by,
Praktisk och enkel lärobok i Engelska språket (1869), 24
A Compendious German and English and English and German Dictionary (1877), co-author, 20
Förenta Staternas folkskolor och högre lärosäten (1879), 20
Sanskritspråkets formlära. . . (1883), 24
Nyborjarens lärobok i engelska språket (1883), 24
Dikter i original och öfversättning (1884), 24-25
A Compendious French Grammar (1890), 31
An Elementary Spanish Grammar (1890), 31
Jämförande grammatik, omfattande Sanskrit, Grekiska, Latin, och Gotiska (1892), 40
Blåklint Nya dikter och öfversättningar (1898), 48
Sommarferier i Montezumas land (1898), 49
A French and English Dictionary (1901), co-author, 49
An Italian and English Dictionary (1901), co-author, 49
Brustna Aterljud: Dikter (1904), 60
 Edgren, Hjalmar, Translations of literary works,
Shakuntala (1875), in Swedish, 18-19; (1894), in English, 49
Mölnbudet (1875), 19
Evangeline (1875), 19
Malavika (1877), 19
Ur Amerikas skönlitteratur: teckningar och öfversättningar (1878), 19
Medeltidens magi (1879), 20
Nala-Sagan (1880), 19
Valda dikter af Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, tolkade (1892), 40
Ibsen, "On the Highlands," (1901), 49
Alfred Tennyson: Dikter i urval (1902), 60
 Edgren, Mrs. Hjalmar (Anna Marianne Steendorff), 22, 25, 27, 32
 Edgren, Johan (progenitor of Edgren family), 2
 Edgren, Johan (Jan, grandfather), 2
 Edgren, Johan Alexander (Alexis, brother), 3, quoted 4, 5-6, 7, 12, 13; letter from, 60-61
 Edgren, Sara Gerda Maria (sister), 3
 Edgren, Verna (daughter), birth of 41, 44, 61
 Education in the U.S.A., 87
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 19
 Emigrants, description of, 16-17
 Enander, John (quoted), 50, 56
 Ericsson, Captain John, 1; battle of *Monitor and Merrimac*, 9-11
 Filipstad, 1
 Fort Monroe, 9, 12
 Fossler, Prof. L. A., 62, characterization of Hjalmar Edgren, 29, 82, 85, 88
 Fröding, Gustaf (quoted), 1
 Gere, Prof. Charles E., 62
 Graduate study at Yale, 18, 19, 21
 Granville, Dr. W. A., 89
Göteborgs Handels-och sjöfarts-tidning (quoted), 15-17, 85-88
Göteborgs Högskola, academic freedom, 36; accreditation, 30; Edgren's role at, 34-42; enrollment (1891-93) 38; faculty, 38; founding and early history, 34-35; lectures and classes, 38-39; resignation of Edgren (1893), 41; reappointment of Edgren considered (1900), 52-53
Göteborgs Kungliga Vetenskaps-och Vitterhets-Samhälle, 34, 40
 Hampton Roads, 11
 Harper, Dr. William Rainey, 56
 Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 19
 Hedlund, Sven August, letters from Hjalmar Edgren, 22-23, 26, 31, 33-34
Hesperian, The (quoted), 43

Index

- Hildebrand, Bengt, characterization of Hjalmar Edgren, 83-84
Hildebrand, Karl, 58
Hokanson, Nels, study cited, 8-9
Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 19
- Ibsen, "On the Highlands" (translation), 49
- Jensen, Alfred, 58
Johnson, Dr. Alvin S. (quoted), 44-45
- Karlstad, 2, 6
- Landsarkivet* (Göteborg), 37
Larsson, Hans Emil, quoted in *Nordisk Tidskrift*, 65
Letterstedt Prize, 60
Liden, B. P. E., 52-53
Lincoln, Neb., description of, 31
Literary contributions. See Edgren, Hjalmar
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth (quoted), 20; translation of poems, 40
Lowell, James Russell, 19
Lund University, 21-26
"Långhalm och lera," 4
- Manley, Robert N. (quoted), 45
Mexico, travel in, 49
Monatt, Chancellor J. Irving (quoted), 27
Monitor and Merrimac, Battle of, 9-11
Nala-Sagan, 19
Nebraska, University of, 26-32, 43-54, 63; graduate program, 47-48; language instruction, 29
New York State Volunteers, 9
Nobel Foundation, 57; Nobel Institute, 57-58; library, 59; regulations for awarding prize in literature, 57-58; relationship of Hjalmar Edgren with Nobel Institute, 58-60
Norberg Prize, 23
Norfolk, 11, 12
- Poe, Edgar Allen, 19
Poetry of Hjalmar Edgren, 64-81
- Ransäter, 1
Rig-Veda, 19
Rip Raps, 9, 12
Rydberg, Viktor, 65
- Sanskrit, 18; grammar, 24; literature, 18, 19
Segerström, Harriot, Greta, Lisa, and Esther, 61
Shakuntala, 18
Sherman, Prof., L. A., 62; characterization of Hjalmar Edgren 18-19, 84
Snoilsky, Carl, 65
Steendorff, Mr. and Mrs. Christian, 22
Stockholms lyceum, 6
Suffolk, Va., siege of, 9, 12
Svenska Amerikanaren (quoted), 56
Svenska Journalen (quoted), 50
Swedes in Civil War, 8-9
Swedish Academy, 57-59
Söderblom, Nathan, 62
- Tegnér, Prof. Esaias, 22, letters to 23, 39, 52, 53, 57-58, 62
Tennyson, Alfred, translation of poems, 60
Translations of literary works, by Edgren, 18-20
- United States, life in, 85-88
Uppsala University, 22, 39
- Villa Ektomte*, 60-61
Vising, Prof. Per Johan, letter to, 51, 52; characterization of Hjalmar Edgren, 83, 84
- Värmland, description of, 1
Värmlands nation, 40
- Warburg, Prof. Karl, 38, 59, 62; characterization of Hjalmar Edgren, 83
Washington, George, servant boy of Hjalmar Edgren, 11-12
Westgård, 3
Whitney, Prof. W. D., 18, 20, 21
Whittier, John Greenleaf, 19
Wijkander, Prof. August, letters from Hjalmar Edgren, 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 42
Wirsén, Carl David af, 57, 58; characterization of Hjalmar Edgren, 62
- Yale University, graduate study, 18, 19, 21
Yorktown, 13
- Zend language, 23
- Älvsbacka, 1, 2
- Östanås bruk*, 2, 3, 4
Österling, Anders (quoted), 58



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